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ABRAHAM L. ERLANGER
The business man in the amusement world

THE BUSINESS MAN —IN THE— AMUSEMENT WORLD

A Volume of Progress in the Field of
the Theatre

By

ROBERT GRAU

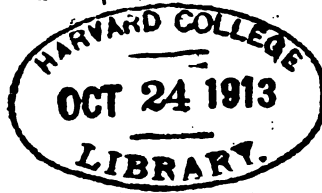
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and the Drama"

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*Gift of
John Craig*



To my dear wife

Prefatory Note

In the previous volume the author was enabled to state that he possessed material sufficient to justify another issue, provided his work was favorably received. The decision to come before his readers again, however, was greatly influenced by the remarkable developments which have come to pass in the last twelve months on the business side of theatredom. A desire to include a number of biographies that were necessarily omitted from the older issue was a minor influence.

The reader will note that much space is devoted to a number of young men who represent the rising generation of "Showmen," and the author wishes to justify this procedure by expressing his belief that they will be found in a predominating position, even while the present volume is seeking vogue.

A number of prophecies are here uttered; and though reluctantly, the author has thought this an appropriate place to express his conviction that

Prefatory Note

not only are we soon to see the entire amusement industry combined under one guiding figure, but it is his belief that the gentlemen who ended the grand opera career in America of the most worthy impresario of his day, will, by reason of their commitments, not only in the musical, but also in the dramatic field, find it feasible to end the regime of one or the other of the two competitive interests in the field of the theatre!

That the amusement calling—a line of endeavor which not so long ago was universally regarded with suspicion and pessimism—should have reached the stage where our multi-millionaires are found openly seeking absolute control of its resources, was sufficient incentive for this writer to prepare the recital which follows:

The serious and lengthy consideration which is given to the possibilities of creating an artificial reproduction of stage presentations through a synchronism of sound and motion (as amplified by the phonograph and motion picture) has been based by the author through his conclusions that the era of the so-called talking picture is almost at hand.

Attention is called to the biographical sketches, some of which are lengthy because of the fact that they contain historic data of uncommon interest.

ROBERT GRAU.

*Mount Vernon, New York.
September, Nineteen Hundred and Ten.*



THE LATE GEORGE GRISWOLD HAVEN, SR.
First President of the Metropolitan Opera House Co.



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Introductory

Is a Volume anent the theatrical business man justified?

The theatrical manager of 1910, as compared with his predecessor of 1870, is indeed a vigorous personage, for, in forty years of progress, the amusement purveyor has advanced to a position, which places him on a level with the great magnates and financiers of the commercial and industrial world.

In the 70's capital for amusement enterprises was not easily obtained; even the managers of reputable theatres and companies were unable to establish a credit basis in their business dealings, while eighty per cent of the men who tempted fate with "the show business," were possessed of little more ammunition for the conduct of their operations, than an abundance of nerve and the proverbial "shoestring"!

System, as we understand the term to-day, was wholly lacking; managers and players alike would be seen on the public pavements, transacting their business; companies were organized in a day, and salaries were paid in dribs and drabs, while tales of stranded Thespians were so common as to occasion no comment.

Through such conditions as these, the pioneer theatrical pathfinder ploughed his way; he toiled and he suffered. If he failed to prosper, he was called a thief,

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yet he was just as honest, and surely quite as worthy as the millionaire showman who in this propitious era is able to reap the harvest which four decades of perseverance have made possible.

A few men, even in those early years, were able to do big things. J. H. Haverly, Henry E. Abbey, John Stetson, Harry Miner and Jarrett and Palmer, by reason of their vast interests and the high-grade methods which distinguished their business policies, were enabled to stand aloof from the general classification of things, but even these had their vicissitudes, and the two most active of all, Abbey and Haverly, died penniless.

Time surely has played pranks in the field of the theatre!

Twelve years ago a couple of boys in Syracuse, N. Y., took it into their heads to start a theatrical tour with a popular play. They were poor boys who had saved a few dollars, and, being brothers, they trusted each other. They leased one theatre in Utica, another in Rochester. In a year or so a third brother was old enough to join them. From this unassuming start has developed, within a single decade, a firm whose achievements are such that half of American theatre-dom is now vested in their hands! To-day this firm buys a six million dollar block, to-morrow it organizes a few million dollar corporations!

A few years before these boys began their activity, a poor, friendless youth came to New York from Germany, and found his way into a variety agency of that day. In two years he entered into partnership with his employer, a man three times his age! In another year he was at the head of his own agency, and ever since has pursued a policy of independence, opposing

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an organization of millionaires, and he has been a constant menace to them!

To-day this same boy—and he may still be called such—is the most commanding individual in the growing field of modern vaudeville. He has a dozen theatres of his own, and is adding to the list constantly, while his opponents are lying awake nights, plotting and planning for the reduction of his forces!

Three years ago, a middle-aged man, wholly unknown to theatricals, saw possibilities in "the Penny Arcade." He began to notice that the craze for moving pictures was reducing his receipts; he divided his audience room into two parts, and in one he presented moving pictures at a five-cent admission scale. This was less than three years ago! To-day this man has twenty theatres in Greater New York alone! As I shall have more to say of him later on, it is not requisite to name him here.

Not so very long ago another man who thought he was fit for something better than to earn \$25 a week, doing a "turn," opened a store moving picture theatre in Brooklyn. This man to-day has a chain of theatres, all veritable gold mines, and within two years he has become rich. He has subleased several theatres that were failures, paying tremendous bonuses in order to do so, and as a side issue, the other day he leased the Academy of Music, paying a rental of \$100,000 a year for a theatre that cost its owner but three times as much!

These observations are recorded here to answer the query at the outset of this chapter! Verily, the subject is not lacking in interest! However, we shall see!

The Business Man

In the

Amusement World



CHAPTER I

INAUGURATION OF SYSTEMATIC BOOKING FACILITIES—THE START AND GROWTH OF THE THEATRICAL SYNDICATE—THE ADVENT OF THE SHUBERTS—ADVANCED VAUDEVILLE—THE CAUSE OF STRAINED RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO LARGE BOOKING INSTITUTIONS—THE INGRATITUDE OF THE AVERAGE LOCAL MANAGER—A PROPHECY!

It is the desire and purpose of the writer, and an effort is made throughout the volume, to emphasize this—to impress the reader with the fact that the men who have become wealthy and powerful, and are in control of the balance of power in the dramatic and vaudeville portions of the general amusement scheme, have reached their position, far less through any great efforts as managers and producers than by their foresight and ingenuity in creating efficient methods for the "booking" of theatres and attractions. By the persistent and stable pursuance of these, they were enabled to control practically the majority of the amusement output, in striking contrast to the fate of the manager and producer who has seemingly been

an insignificant factor. And yet the latter has been, by every means of fair calculation, the sustaining influence whereby the booking syndicates, the "Czars" and the "Napoleons" of the theatrical world, have thrived.

To convey a concrete view of the conditions created through the foresight here referred to, it is necessary to carry the reader back three and four decades, and place before him a panoramic exhibit of the development of a business, which, from being wholly without discipline or standing, has grown to be on a par with all other fields of endeavor in the business world.

Forty years ago there were perhaps half a dozen men engaged in the "Show" business, as it was then called, who had reached the dignity of having an office for the conduct of their affairs. The out-of-town manager would come to New York in the summer, and hie himself to the "Rialto," then on Union Square, where he would find every phase of the business itself conducted upon the pavements. The most prominent players, including the stars and their respective managers and agents, could be found parading the sidewalks, their date books in their hands. Those were the days of the barnstormer, when the "Fly by Night" manager was in his element. All classes of showmen congregated here, and here the plans of the most important stage providers were matured for many years.

There were few agencies in those days, and the most primitive ideas prevailed. A manager with more than one or two theatres was a rara avis; the stock company was then prevalent, and there was a dearth of touring combinations.

Hal Sleeper Taylor started, 35 years ago, in East

14th Street, a bureau which had for its purpose the systematizing of the booking facilities for theatres and companies; he was the pioneer and founder of principles, which his successors have carried out to the extent that to-day they virtually control the entire amusement business, outside of grand opera.

Marc Klaw and Abraham L. Erlanger had been holding important positions in advance of well-known stars thirty years ago; one had come from the dramatic critic's desk of the "Louisville Commercial," the other from the box office of a Cleveland theatre. Together they proceeded to purchase the Taylor Exchange, and by the vigorous application of a well-laid plan they immediately became powerful and influential. In due time they represented the majority of the theatres of the country, and gradually became producers of plays on a modest scale. Later they built two theatres in New Orleans, which gave them a sort of "Key to the South," formerly held by Jacob Tannenbaum, an old-time Southern manager with a successful, if not important, career, whose reputation for commercial rectitude has endeared him to the theatrical profession of a generation.

Klaw and Erlanger moved the Rialto, first up to 28th Street, then to 30th Street, where they had an entire building devoted to the constructive side of theatricals. Here were offices of any number of managers, local and provincial, and every phase of theatrical equipment was represented. The result may easily be surmised.

About this time Al Hayman, who had amassed a fortune in Australia and California, became affiliated with the firm, also with Charles Frohman, who at this very time had started a booking bureau of his own.

Frohman had not yet become a conspicuous figure as a producer, in fact, he was hardly prospering, but the Hayman and Frohman affiliation shortly afterwards began to demonstrate itself, particularly after "Shenandoah" was produced at what is now Proctor's Theatre on West 23d Street.

Finally an agreement was effected by which several gentlemen, then holding large interests in theatres and companies, combined to form an alliance now known as the Theatrical Syndicate; these were, besides Klaw and Erlanger, Hayman and Frohman, the Messrs. Nixon and Zimmerman of Philadelphia, and Rich and Harris of Boston.

The offices were moved still further uptown to the Holland Building, and finally to the New Amsterdam Theatre, where they are now located.

Charles Frohman's operations increased, until he owned or controlled half of New York's best theatres, and provided the majority of the important dramatic attractions and the most compelling stars. Klaw and Erlanger built more theatres, while Hayman figured in everything that the others did, though he was not personally conspicuous.

Affiliated with these gentlemen were the producing managers of the country, such as Charles Dillingham, William A. Brady, Liebler and Company, Joseph Brooks, Jacob Litt and others.

If the truth were known, the great fortune which the Theatrical Syndicate has accumulated, would be found to be based on the booking commission or interest which they have in hundreds of theatres not their own. The reader has but to calculate that if only an average of five per cent of the receipts of more than five hundred theatres were paid to the

New York institution, the total amount would reach amazing figures; in many theatres the Syndicate interest is larger, while in no instance is it smaller.

Until recently, with the exception of the enterprises controlled by David Belasco and Harrison Grey Fiske, the entire amusement business of high grade in this country was vested in Syndicate hands; until a year or so ago, as stated by the writer in the first volume, there had never been a serious break in the ranks of this concern. Even the two "Independents," Messrs. Belasco and Fiske, are now in friendly affiliation with their erstwhile opponents, though they claim to be free from any obligation to confine their bookings to the Theatrical Syndicate.

About ten years ago a mere boy, frail and undersized, began to attract attention up in New York State, where he had been securing theatres in the larger cities between New York and Buffalo. One day he came into the Metropolis—still a boy—and surprised staid observers by leasing the Herald Square Theatre. That boy was the late Sam S. Shubert, who, in the few years that he was permitted to live and operate, displayed a remarkable aptitude for theatrical management, together with a keen discernment and ripe judgment in all matters appertaining thereto.

The principles which this boy established and which, after his shocking death in a railroad disaster, were expanded by his brothers Lee and J. J. Shubert, have resulted in the first upheaval recorded to date in the affairs of the Theatrical Syndicate.

Sam Shubert's methods attracted the attention of a few mercantile gentlemen who were prevailed upon to invest in his Central New York theatres and stock companies; these proved profitable, and the Shuberts

have had no difficulty in securing co-operation and capital to further their many interests since.

From the outset the Shuberts have protested against the rule of Messrs. Klaw and Erlanger. A few years ago, when they were far less potent than they are to-day, they declared their independence. Such was their influence that, during the period when Klaw and Erlanger's advent into "Advanced Vaudeville" necessitated the securing of allies, the Shuberts were sought out, and it was through this alliance that the scheme of advanced vaudeville did not die almost before birth.

The coalition, however, was not productive of beneficial results, although, through the clever manipulation of the vaudeville season at the Chicago Auditorium by George W. Lederer, the interests known as the United Booking Syndicate were forced to pay \$250,000 in cash and assume contract liabilities amounting to nearly a million dollars, in order to end the vaudeville regime of Klaw and Erlanger, and their associates, which included the Messrs. Shubert.

The direct cause of the second and more serious break between these two concerns was undoubtedly the tendency to expand on the part of the younger firm. They claimed that they were not accorded proper or advantageous booking of their attractions and theatres, though up to two years ago all other producing firms were apparently satisfied with such allotments as it pleased the Syndicate to assign them; the impression prevailed that a daily theatrical paper, which had taken sides against the Shuberts in the open rupture that was the result of this contention, was a prime factor in the final separation of the two concerns.

A year ago, as stated elsewhere in these pages, Liebler and Company joined the Shuberts; the announcement naturally created a sensation, and it is but fair to state that during the first year of their new affiliation, they were able to make nearly two score new productions, and to augment the number of their permanent successes.

Almost of equal importance is the alliance of William A. Brady with the "Independent" forces. Mr. Brady controls some of the best box office attractions in this country, some of which, such as "Way Down East" and "The Shepherd King," have the element of longevity and show no signs of decline, while such stars as Grace George (Mrs. Brady), Robert B. Mantell, Nat C. Goodwin, Jr., and Louis Mann, will surely add greatly to the Shubert attractions. Mr. Brady has stated that he has been restrained from much desired activity as a producer because of the restrictions which he has had to contend with; it is augured that his alliance with the Shuberts will permit him to extend his operations materially.

As long as these changes and shifts (some call them "Flops"), are orderly and do not occur at too frequent intervals, or result in a stampede, they carry no momentous significance with them.

The amusement business of this country is growing in scope and immensity; it is more than likely that, as time elapses, an equalization will develop with the two contending concerns. The country is outgrowing old, and constantly requiring new resources, hence it will not be supprising if a few years from now will find the Shuberts expanded to such an extent that their present holdings will seem insignificant in comparison; this does not necessarily mean that the older

concern will have deteriorated. Mr. Erlanger is not the sort of a man to be associated with a retrograde movement—no better general ever lived; as an organizer he is incomparable.

It must be understood that all or nearly all of the alliances with the Theatrical Syndicate are effected without contract; in no other field is business conducted so much upon "Word of Honor," and in many of the most important affiliations even "A Gentleman's Agreement" is lacking. As a matter of fact, Klaw and Erlanger have exerted their sway solely through an ability to "deliver the goods"; all have been welcome to come and go at will. The wonder is that they have been able to hold so many vastly different minds, and conciliate so many and such widely different interests.

That such a regime as theirs could be successfully presided over only by an absolutely fair-minded man, is not to be questioned, although there seems, at this time, to be a plethora of mud-throwing, and an effort to create the impression of general dissensions throughout the Syndicate alliance. The writer does not believe that anything serious is to develop, or that there will be much to add in the way of "Flops" to those here recorded.

There is another phase of this procedure that may well receive attention, and that is to what extent the desertions of such important syndicate allies as William A. Brady and Julius Cahn have been tempted by coin of the realm; also, in the event that the suggestion is justifiable, whether in that case such proceedings indicate strength or desperation on the part of the tempter.

It is known that capital to almost any amount is

available for the purpose of destroying the business of the men who, despite all that may be said, have caused discipline and rectitude to prevail in the amusement world; the source of this capital can be traced not far from Central Park West.

All these late developments, which mean so much for the future of the theatre in America, had their beginnings in that moment when the Syndicate's leading figure turned his back on New York and set sail for a few days' vacation abroad; may he be found equal to any emergency!



The impression made upon the public, and perhaps upon timid professionals by the action of many local managers in the smaller cities, is hardly warranted. An investigation discloses that a disastrous season due to new conditions has come to an end. "The Janitors," who, for years, have been sitting in their sanctums, amassing fortunes, doing no work, taking no risk, reaping benefits from the discipline and regularity inaugurated by Klaw and Erlanger, have become afflicted with a grievance which, owing to the machinations of three or four leaders, has gradually assumed ridiculous proportions.

If there is an individual in theatredom who should feel grateful toward Klaw and Erlanger, it is the local manager! I carry no brief for either of these gentlemen; it is ten years since I have seen Mr. Erlanger, and Mr. Klaw I do not even know personally. I have never had a courtesy extended to me by either and they are, up to the time these pages were written, not even subscribers to this volume, but right is right!

Ask Pat Short who made him rich in St. Louis, and if he does not say, "Klaw and Erlanger," it will be surprising. Ask L. N. Scott of St. Paul to whom he attributes the golden era which came to him in the twin cities, and he will tell you he blesses the day that the Theatrical Syndicate regulated an almost despised calling, which only in the last decade has attained professional dignity.

There are men now posing as insurgents and distributing literature defamatory to this so-called Syndicate that have been lifted from beggary to affluence by its achievements.

We know that the pioneer rarely profits, but because Klaw and Erlanger were the first to accumulate vast sums through their own initiative, are they any less entitled to it than their successors? Would the opportunity for "Independents" be what it is to-day, if Klaw and Erlanger's loyalty to the local manager did not preclude them from adding to their commitments?

There are no theatres in the Shubert chain that the syndicate policy would permit Klaw and Erlanger to operate!

After all it is simply and merely a case of come and go! Contracts seem to have been lacking, and after years of harvest these local managers are following leaders who some day may be taxed for an accounting.



The writer is inclined to believe that a combine of the complete theatrical industry in America is imminent. Recent changes have conspired to bring about a most complicated state of affairs, the logical outcome of which may be surmised. The further the two

opposing interests go in their operations to defeat the purposes of one side or the other, the nearer they are to an ultimate coalition which will be so binding and have so momentous an effect that the era of competition will be ended until this very condition creates a new element, opposed to the combine itself.

Bitterness of feeling has never yet been so malicious that large moneyed interests would carry on a struggle for a supremacy which benefited only the salaried element. The tendency is for these men to get together; all the desertions from the so-called theatrical syndicate have been a result of the disastrous season of 1909-10. At this writing the various managers of theatres in cities of the second and third grade have practically combined for an independent policy. The position of Messrs. Klaw and Erlanger in such a condition is unchanged, save that they would book the attractions of the important producing managers in the larger cities, and such of the smaller ones as remain available to them.

It is reasonable to suppose that Messrs. Shubert, Liebler and Company, and the recent allies by whom their forces have been strengthened, cannot provide enough stage material to supply all the twelve hundred theatres in the latest combination for independence; therefore, the season of 1910-11, is likely to record so disastrous an outcome that, long before the season is finished, the various rival interests may be amalgamated into one vast booking concern which will undoubtedly take in everything of a theatrical nature, even the larger (and perhaps the smaller) vaudeville houses.

Such a combine must eventually come, however ill it may serve the artistic phase of the situation. Busi-

ness men are, after all, merely human. The spectacle of Mr. Erlanger at war with Mr. Shubert is not genuine; they have waged two wars and are now in the midst of a third and last battle, which will establish a permanent peace. How soon? Perhaps before these pages reach the reader, perhaps not for a year, but it will come, sooner or later, and then will be recorded the long expected billion dollar trust in theatredom.

But no matter how great the combine is, there will always be an opposing faction; there will always be competition. One theatre is competition, as William Morris said, when he leased the American Theatre. "With this one house I can fight and whip the combined interests of vaudeville!" So he maintained and he has lived to verify his assertion. This same man, Morris, will probably be the last to abandon his independence, yet the day will come when even he will be numbered in the most gigantic trust octopus that the business world has ever known.

The writer is reluctant to make these prophecies; still the real reason for the issuance of this second volume is the fulfillment of the prophecies made in the first, and he realizes that further developments will come.

The developments, which occur while this volume is in a state of preparation, do not seemingly require any extended comment, and surely do not necessitate any change of expression from the writer. The addition of Moses Reis and John Cort, to the list of deserters from the ranks of the organization known as the Theatrical Syndicate, has no great significance—Mr. Reis' position was identical with that of Julius Cahn—the two were closely affiliated—hence the atti-

tude of one was influential in causing the ultimatum of the other, these gentlemen own or lease but a small portion of the theatres which are vested in their hands for booking purposes. An important question arises in connection with these "Flops" as to the attitude of the various local managers in the many cities of smaller size.

It is not to be expected that Klaw and Erlanger and their associates are to remain passive—in such a state of affairs—hence it remains to be disclosed how many of these managers will submit to the change effected by their New York representatives, for not all will be willing to forego the privilege of negotiating for the horde of first-class attractions controlled by the Syndicate and the many producing managers with which they are affiliated—such as Charles Frohman, Al H. Woods, Cohan and Harris, H. B. Harris, Charles Dillingham, Joseph Brooks, Henry Miller, David Belasco, Harrison Grey Fiske, etc., and after all the changes are not all in one direction. The last three named producers were a year or more ago the strongest allies whom the Messrs. Shubert had—thus emphasizing the point of view of this writer, that no extraordinary upheaval is created through any orderly shifting of the scenes. The immense expansion of the amusement output requires additional resources to constitute the outlet, therefore, as stated elsewhere in these pages, the Messrs. Shubert are due to greatly augment their holdings which should by no means cause the obliteration of the older concern.

No surprise need be created if the enormous number of new and beautiful theatres which have been and are being erected to house the moving picture industry—would some day, not so far off at that—

prove to be the means by which a third competitor entered the field. It must be remembered that in the last few years 30,000 theatres of all sorts of size and construction have come into existence in this country. The smaller of these, known as the "Store Theatre" are gradually being eliminated, or else are undergoing enlargement to meet new conditions.

Already the moving picture manufacturers are found unable to supply the films necessary. The industry has grown beyond all bounds of capacity, this has necessitated the introduction of vaudeville acts. The public created as it becomes educated to better presentations, begin to demand more and better acts. The theatres are then built or remodeled to meet new conditions, until there is very little difference between them and the standard theatres—some of these newer auditoriums are in excellent locations, and combined they constitute a force and an asset in the amusement world which will provide a future historian of the theatre much material for a recital of the problems of his day.

CHAPTER II

A TRIBUTE TO THE LATE WILLIAM STEINWAY—THE RUBINSTEIN-WIENIAWSKI TOUR IN 1872-73—THE ELDER SALVINI'S FIRST VISIT—THE PRESENT GRAND OPERA SITUATION—SOME HISTORY OF GRAND OPERA IN NEW YORK—THE REMARKABLE DEVELOPMENT IN MUSICAL MATTERS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY—IMPROVED TYPE OF LOCAL IMPRESARIO—MAURICE GRAU'S WARNING TO HIS GRAND OPERA STARS—A HAMMERSTEIN COINCIDENCE—A TRIBUTE TO THE "DETHRONED" IMPRESARIO—A PROPHECY WHICH FORESHADOWS THE ERECTION OF OPERA HOUSES IN ALL LARGE CITIES!

The late William Steinway alone made possible the great musical events which the American public of the 70's and a part of the 80's enjoyed. He it was who provided the capital necessary to bring Anton Rubinstein and Henri Wieniawski to this country in 1872. As evidence that Mr. Steinway was not without public spirit in these matters, it is recalled that when in the following year Maurice Grau, the impresario who brought these virtuosi hither, signified his intention of entering into a contract with the Italian tragedian Tommaso Salvini for an American tour, the broad-minded and generous pioneer of pianistic fame was the one to hand to the impresario, without the least security or the slightest opportunity for personal gain, the ten thousand dollars required as a deposit.

William Steinway did more for musical progress, and did it less ostentatiously, than any American whom history can recall. He built Steinway Hall on East 14th street, wholly and solely to further musical endeavor; and this large and commodious hall was always at the disposal, without rental, of any one desirous of providing artistic and educational entertainment. Many of the achievements which he promoted there have contributed, in a greater degree, to the present era of musical prosperity than all the efforts of our opera house founders combined.

It will be interesting to record the terms under which Rubinstein and Wieniawski were enticed to these shores. The contract was originally made out in Vienna by Jacob Grau, uncle of the late Maurice Grau, and called for one hundred concerts at an honorarium of \$200 per concert for Rubinstein, and \$100 per concert for Wieniawski. Jacob Grau met with an accident at Vienna, and Maurice Grau, who had just reached his majority, and had been graduated from Columbia University, forsook law, to enter upon a managerial career. On him fell the responsibility of the tour of these virtuosi. The Russian pianist opened at Steinway Hall in September, 1872, to an audience which represented at the box office \$1,700, at that time regarded as something phenomenal. The prices of seats ranged from fifty cents to two dollars; the programme enlisted, besides the two noted musicians, a soprano and contralto, Mesdames Liebhardt and Ormeny.

As an illustration of the public desire for classical music as interpreted by these artists, it is recorded that the largest receipts of the entire tour were at a Monday matinee recital, when \$3,100 was taken in at

the box office. Rubinstein gave the entire programme himself, and, as it was the first occasion of this kind, it may be set down as having established the precedent for the recital as it prevails to-day. The average receipts at the box office in New York for the Rubinstein-Wieniawski concerts were less than one thousand dollars per concert, while on tour the results were by no means striking for such an attraction. Hartford, always a great musical centre, had three visits, the largest receipts being \$2,200, while the smallest was \$1,400; Pittsburgh, now a veritable gold mine for similar events, contributed \$617, while receipts as low as \$500 were often recorded in the larger cities.

Nevertheless, the enterprise yielded a profit of \$60,000 to the management, but this was greatly due to the arrangement effected in the middle of the tour with Theodore Thomas' orchestra, which combination constituted by far the greatest amalgamation of musical grandeur that has ever been heard anywhere. Yet this aggregation of genius was available to the public of that time at two dollars for the best seats.

Rubinstein bitterly resented the terms under which he was induced to visit America, and the feeling between him and his impresario, while not strained, was none too friendly; he vowed he would never return to America, however large the offer would be, and although Mr. Grau made many strenuous efforts to prevail on him, in after years, and offered as high as \$3,000 per concert, the Russian always declined.

Rubinstein was characterized by the New York Herald as a lion in person and a giant in art, and this description fits his personality admirably.

Wieniawski, the violinist, was almost as great from

an artistic point of view, as the distinguished pianist himself, but he was handicapped by his very association with his illustrious confrere, and he, too, was never induced to come hither again, though his proverbial geniality precluded any feeling of bitterness against his impresario, and the two remained intimate friends for many years.

Henri Wieniawski was the greatest violin virtuoso heard since Joachim, and none of the great exponents of that instrument who have visited this country since Wieniawski's day could compare with him; yet he was paid but \$100 per concert.

Surely we are living in a most propitious era, at least from a musical standpoint, for the earnings of our modern soloists are simply prodigious in comparison.

Paderewski often received, for one concert, as much as Rubinstein obtained for ten, while Ysaye and Kubelik were favored in no less a degree as compared with Wieniawski.



Charlotte Cushman rarely praised other players, but when she did set the seal of approval on the efforts of a confrere, her words echoed round the world. Therefore, when the greatest Lady Macbeth of all time pronounced the Othello of Tommaso Salvini "the greatest piece of individual acting the world ever saw," and when it is recalled that the illustrious Italian was presented in this country in the season of 1873-74 almost solely on the Cushman indorsement, some idea may be obtained of the value placed upon so definite and authoritative an utterance.

Maurice Grau, who had put his profits of the Anton

Rubinstein tour into the Salvini enterprise, was at that time a young and ambitious impresario of 23. He had succeeded his uncle, Jacob Grau, who had met with an accident in Vienna and inherited his contracts, among which was the contract with Signor Salvini.

Tommaso Salvini's Othello was indeed worthy of all possible praise. On the nights when the tragedian was seen as the Moor it was almost impossible to obtain seats, which cost three dollars apiece. Yet when the actor appeared as Hamlet or Romeo, or even in his superb, or shall I say sublime? rendition of Conrad in "La Morte Civile" empty benches greeted the distinguished foreigner, who received no fixed honorarium on his first American tour, but furnished his company and paraphernalia for 50 per cent of the gross receipts. Salvini's refusal to play Othello more than once a week (out of the four representations he gave weekly) was purely arbitrary, and, of course, directly opposed to the wish of his manager, since \$2,900 for Othello on a Monday evening and \$269 for Samson on a Wednesday was not uncommon.

When my brother remonstrated with the great Italian, who was quite as ferocious off the stage as when portraying the Moor, Salvini would defend his position by pointing to his Othello costume. He exclaimed that he could not possibly wear that costume again for four days, insisting that it was a physical impossibility for him to give a portrayal worthy of his artistic standard within five days of a previous one. In after years, even after the dignity of an Italian supporting company was discarded, and when his own high artistic notions had been somewhat

modified to suit modern conditions, he still clung to his rule of four performances weekly, a procedure which made profit impossible, although in his last two tours it was possible for American audiences to see him twice in one week as Othello.

Salvini's Italian supporting company was, without question, the worst collection of incompetent players New York had ever seen. Signora Piamonti, the leading woman, who appeared as Desdemona, was alone worthy of the great star. The Iago of Alessandro Salvini (a brother of Tommaso) was so bad that only the knowledge of his relationship with the star permitted him to be tolerated. Some critics hinted that Salvini purposely brought over an inferior company in order that his own towering strength should dominate, and it was difficult indeed to otherwise account for the Iago of his brother.

Toward the end of the first tour, when the financial outlook was most threatening—due to the star's refusal to play Othello more frequently—Salvini presented almost unannounced his masterful conception of the role of David Garrick. This proved a tremendous drawing card, and indeed resulted in the largest audiences of his tour, making it possible for Maurice Grau to end the season without loss. Salvini claimed that his own losses were in excess of \$50,000. He left our shores bitterly denouncing American audiences, and sorely disappointed at the results of the tour which he had been tempted to make because of the great success achieved by Adelaide Ristori, whose first visit to the United States netted her \$150,000.



The grand opera situation in America was never so

interesting as at the period when these pages are being prepared, and the eyes of all Europe, as well as America, are directed toward the new order of things at The Metropolitan Opera House, and a great interest is evinced as to the results of Oscar Hammerstein's European operations during the summer of 1910.

It is necessary to indulge somewhat in the retrospective in order to present the reader with an epitomized review of the progress, which has been made in the presentation of grand opera during the last four decades.

The Metropolitan Opera House came into being, rather as a result of unrest among the social lions responsible for the maintenance of The Academy of Music, than from any necessity to move the operatic centre two miles further north. New fortunes were being made in the financial and business world, and the restrictions and old fogysm which prevailed among the stockholders of the older house, were resented by the younger set; hence the big yellow structure on upper Broadway was determined upon. Twenty-seven years ago it was dedicated. Its first season was the most disastrous, financially, in the history of American grand opera,—but of this more will appear elsewhere.

Grand opera, strange as the statement may sound to-day, had prospered only when rendered in English. Parepa Rosa, Clara Louise Kellogg and Emma Abbott were able to attract, pay their way and to bank large surplus funds, while the impresarios whom the public looked to for the foreign article, such as the Strakosches, Max Maretzek and Colonel Mapleson, passed through vicissitudes which would read strangely in

these days. One impresario proclaimed that the ultimate destination of his kind was either the poor house or the county jail, and this remark was regarded as less humorous than practical.

Always excepting the furore created by some visiting diva, such as Patti or Gerster, or the extraordinary occasions when a Wachtel or Lucca would be heard, the great majority of all efforts to give grand opera in Italian and German, ended most disastrously, while the spectacle of an entirely profitable season was an absolute rarity. Mapleson, it is true, on his first visit with Etelka Gerster and an ensemble to which New York had not been accustomed, did pull through without financial scandal, but profit was out of the question.

Henry E. Abbey was prompted to lease the Metropolitan solely through an ambition to become a real impresario; he knew he was playing with fire. "I'll lose \$150,000 and am prepared for it," he said to Maurice Grau whom he had engaged as acting manager, in the hope that the latter's experience would tend to reduce the enormous deficit. "But you will lose nearer a half million than \$150,000," said Maurice, and it may be here truthfully stated that the losses of that first season at The Metropolitan were close to \$400,000.

After Abbey came Leopold Damrosch who conducted a prolonged term of German and Wagnerian Opera, and although the artistic scale was of the highest, and the entire enterprise notable for its intellectual conception, the losses were prodigious.

Then Abbey came back, and this time Maurice Grau was his full fledged partner. In the first year of this regime Mr. Grau made a discovery that resulted in

a new era, and thus was created the \$10,000 a night audience, attracted by the potency of an old opera, "Faust," but with a new, and so called "ideal cast," which included the two De Reszkes, M. La Salle, Emma Eames and Sofia Scalchi.

It was this discovery, and the manner in which Mr. Grau adhered to it persistently that finally broke the operatic hoodoo, and the unusual spectacle of big dividends was eventually created.

The last three years of the Grau-Regime (after Mr. Abbey's death) were all immensely profitable. The way had been found to give grand opera even in extravagant style, with a plethora of stars at each performance, to pay dividends of from sixty to one hundred and fifty per cent, and then this impresario died—"leaving enough to pay his funeral expenses"—at his country home in France, aged fifty-eight.

Maurice never posed as a great musical thinker. He did not pretend to labor for art; he understood the public.

After Mr. Grau came Herr Conried, who, like his predecessor, was forced to retire in the middle of his consulship. Mr. Conried was fortunate in having come into possession of the contract made by Maurice Grau with Enrico Caruso, and while dividends were not large during this regime, the receipts at the box office were constantly increasing, and each year the subscription grew, until it was possible to calculate in advance, a total gross revenue in excess of one million dollars for a twenty weeks season. Herr Conried left a fortune, said to amount to about \$350,000, which must have been accumulated during the three years of his regime at the Metropolitan, for it is known that but a few years before he assumed direction there,

he was in financial straits, as a result of disastrous operations in the light opera field.

Messrs. Grau and Conried organized corporations composed of eminent financiers who were prompted to give financial aid undoubtedly in public spirit, and these gentlemen, at the time when Herr Conried was forced to retire, decided to take upon themselves the sole responsibility for New York's grand opera. Thus it was that an era of artistic policies was created which was also signalized by the advent of a doubleheaded managerial arrangement that caused disaster from the very outset.

Signor G. Gatti Casazza and Herr Andreas Dippel presided for two years with artistic results no better than heretofore, while the deficit for this period was literally enormous, despite the fact that the subscription was six times as large as it was during the season when Maurice Grau was able to declare a dividend of one hundred and fifty per cent.

In the last year of Herr Conried's regime Oscar Hammerstein entered upon the scene, and at first his advent was regarded by his opponents as of no consequence, but as "The Wizard of West 34th Street" proceeded, he gradually caused the older concern to "sit up and take notice."

The spectacle of two grand opera institutions was not a new one; in fact, a generation ago, New York heard quite as many stars for three dollars for the best seats at The Academy, as it hears to-day at The Metropolitan for almost double the price.

It is doubtful whether such artists as Nilsson, Gerster, Cary, Campanini, Del Puente and Galassi can be duplicated to-day; yet, while they were singing at The Academy, another organization under Max Maret-

zek, headed by Pauline Lucca and the Spanish tenor Tamberlik, sang at The Grand Opera House.

This retrospective drift on the part of the writer is for the purpose of conveying to the reader an idea as to the type of operatic representation which old New Yorkers—many of whom are still living—enjoyed at prices of admission about one-half of what is paid to-day at either opera house.



That the Metropolitan Opera House may be conducted with profit to an impresario, and still maintain the highest ideals artistically, is evidenced emphatically in the revelations from the probate of the will of the late Heinrich Conried.

His predecessor, Maurice Grau, had amassed the greater part of his fortune in the last few years of his regime at the big opera house, and now it is found that Herr Conried left a fortune amounting to \$350,000, all of which was conserved from his operatic career of less than three years. It is not so long ago that the "Herr Director" was in dire straits as a result of his reverses with English comic opera. And yet there were no dividends for the stockholders during the Conried regime, nor have there been any since Signor G. Gatti Casazza became the impresario, but surely what Messrs. Grau and Conried could achieve, can at least be equalled to-day; it is undoubtedly some such theory as this that has caused a return to the commercial opera methods as in evidence during the season of 1910-11.

A profit of more than \$60,000 was recorded in New Orleans for a short season in the historic French

Opera House in the winter of 1909. This was the first really prosperous season the Crescent City had known in many years, excepting perhaps Henry Russell's short season there in the preceding year.



The Metropolitan Opera House was in the twenty-fifth year of its regime, before Boston or Philadelphia awakened to the need of a real opera house, devoted solely to grand opera. The Hippodrome, however, bids fair to reach other large cities, before the New York institution shall have existed for a third of the time requisite to create other opera houses. Such reflections indicate progress. There is no better way to penetrate into the public taste, therefore, one may predict with safety that The New Theatre and its methods will be duplicated in Boston, Chicago and Philadelphia, at least within the next five years.

The erection of other hippodromes will necessitate a vast reduction in the managerial outlay, just as the possibility of grand opera in three cities means less cost and more stars for each.

The symphony orchestras which are now to be found prospering in many cities and on tour, came into being as a result of the incentive provided by the New York Philharmonic Society, which, when under the direction of Carl Bergman, forty years ago, was just as potent as now.

Why these symphony orchestras succeed, even in the locales where indifference to classical music is shown, may be easily explained. No sane person will assume that a man like Victor Herbert expects that his efforts with symphony orchestras will financially avail him; his time in any event would bring ten fold

results in the fields wherein Mr. Herbert is known to prosper amazingly, yet the brilliant Irish maestro has for years allied himself with Pittsburg's Symphony Orchestra at a great loss and inconvenience to himself.

The writer dwells on this subject in order to emphasize the effect which is now being shown from the display of public spirit among great financiers in every large city of the country. Gradually these efforts will expand into less important centres, and the day can not be far off, when the Clevelands, the Buffalos and the Denvers will be found sustaining opera houses, hippodromes and even playhouses, based upon the policy now prevailing in The New Theatre.

New Orleans with its cosmopolitan population has supported its opera house for half a century, and, during the last season, enriched its directors as never before, while San Francisco presents the best opportunity for a similar enterprise, which this country affords. Denver, Seattle, St. Paul and Minneapolis abound in musical organizations and societies which have for their object the establishment of permanent grand opera, where only the "stars" will be necessary as "guests," the choral and orchestral bodies as well as the voices for the minor roles being already provided.

This development in the musical field is furthered greatly by the broad policies practiced in the big conservatories of the country; the day is close at hand when the custom of sending the American singer and musician abroad will be unnecessary. Oscar Hammerstein demonstrated the truth of this assertion in his discovery and presentation of Orville Harold, a tenor whom he had observed singing in vaudeville

theatres, and whom he had decided to send to Paris that he might benefit by the advice and tuition of Jean De Reszke. But it soon became obvious that this procedure was unnecessary.

Already American teachers are able to hold their pupils exclusively under their own tutelage, and the spectacle of European singers coming to America to study under an American maestro, such as Oscar Saenger, for he is to all intent and purposes an American, is not uncommon; while several of our most efficient voice specialists have hied themselves to European capitals, taking with them their most promising pupils. London and Paris are now dotted with studios of this character.

An important announcement made recently, tends to confirm the statement that America is destined to be regarded as the Mecca for everything musical. Mr. Thomas Quinlan, an English impresario who has become a powerful factor in London's musical scheme, has purchased and absorbed the Wolfsohn Musical Bureau, the largest and oldest agency in this country. The effect of the combine of Mr. Quinlan's foreign bureau with that of the native concern, can not fail to be of widespread influence, while the growth of the business, conducted by Mr. M. H. Hanson promises much.

Less than thirteen years ago Mr. Hanson was negotiating with Messrs. Rubens and Andrews, an important musical bureau of that day, and he spent several years in observation of the musical situation. Finally he decided to establish himself as an impresario, presenting Dr. Ludwig Wüllner in a series of unique song recitals which, for two years, have been among the most interesting and most successful

events of the musical season. The success of Wüllner induced Hanson to extend operations. His conduct of the tournees of Busoni, the great pianistic marvel, the Dutch contralto, Tilly Koenen, the 'cellist, Boris Hambourg, and the Parisian singer, Reinhold Von Warlich, has been almost equally productive from both a musical and a financial standpoint. It is not so long ago that the entourage of any one of these artists would be regarded as sufficient in itself for one impresario's efforts, but Mr. Hanson who is a striking illustration of modern musical progress, is planning on an enormous scale for the future. Taken all in all, he is perhaps the most interesting figure in the musical managerial world to-day.



Not only in the larger cities is it possible for phenomenal financial results in these days; some of the smaller communities which, a decade ago, were practically unknown in musical history, are now prominent in the tours of the greatest celebrities. This is due to the advent of a superior type of local manager, whose achievements are such that he is not debarred from preferring a just claim to be entitled impresario. The day of the "house janitor," having in charge the business arrangements of visiting musical attractions, is of the distant past.

I have in mind a city in Michigan whose fame as a musical centre is by no means unimportant. I refer to Houghton, and surely it is worthy of mention that three months before the appearance of Mme. Schumann-Heink in that hitherto unheard-of city, every seat and box had been sold. Albert R. Cox is to be credited with this remarkable demonstration of a con-

dition existing in this year of 1910 in cities where, a decade ago, "Uncle Tom's Cabin," or "Humpty Dumpty" would be required to conjure the inhabitants. Mr. Cox, enthused by his success with the famous contralto, has offered large guarantees for Mme. Melba and also for Mme. Marcella Sembrich, to appear within a single year. Can anything be more significant? It is not so long ago that an impresario would complain that there were only thirty cities in this country, where an artiste of high rank, and whose honorarium was listed in four figures, could be booked; it would seem that if there are many Houghtons whose musical development is furthered by men of Mr. Cox's calibre, then indeed are we face to face with a unique and interesting condition.



Once when Maurice Grau was returning from a disastrous Western tour with the Metropolitan Opera House Company, before he had solved the problem of creating an equilibrium between the expenses and receipts, he was in one of those moods, which his intimates often were unable to unmask, for he was of that type of business man who shows no outward appearance of distress, when the public is indifferent, nor waxes enthusiastic, when his efforts are crowned with success. But on this particular occasion the impresario had observed the thousand dollar a night stars gazing in ecstasy at the beauties of the Hudson River and the superb mountain view of the Catskill district.

Maurice arose from his seat in the parlor car, when informed of the object of all this admiration, and some of the artists sought to withdraw and engage him in

conversation. "Gaze on, my children, gaze long at the entrancing scene, which here confronts you," he quietly observed, "for this is the last time that you will see this wondrous spectacle at my expense!"

Oscar Hammerstein must have held similar views, when he crossed the ocean last summer with many of his song birds as companions; he must have known then that the plans for ending his worries would mature, before he again reached land. It will be recalled that Miss Mary Garden had, a few days before, left American shores with her head high and with a verbal threat that "never again" would she sing for Oscar, until he apologized. That apology is no longer necessary, unless the temperamental Mary is favorably inclined towards becoming a "headliner" of the Manhattan Music Hall, if that edifice is so used.

We may not have to wait so long, either, to hear some of these public pets in the varieties. At least one of the magnates in this field has offered \$100,000 for twenty weeks, not only to Miss Garden, but to others less in demand for opera.

Each year the barriers are becoming narrower, and if the Manhattan Opera House is eventually to become a theatre of varieties, its size and location will make possible innovations which will provide an interesting outlet for the surplus energy—stored in "the head beneath that wonderful hat!"

At regular prices, which now obtain at the Victoria Theatre, the Manhattan Music Hall will have a capacity of \$35,000 a week; thus it is not likely that its director will become an unimportant figure in the general amusement scheme, even if he is dethroned in the grand opera field.

The withdrawal of Mr. Oscar Hammerstein from operatic direction is a logical outcome of the various developments which are the result of the policy of retrenchment, openly declared in both our operatic institutions long before the season of 1909-10 had come to an end. The intrepid Herr Director of West 34th Street spoke from the heart, when, in answer to a \$200 cablegram from his son, Arthur, he expressed himself as being both glad and sorry.

It was only to be expected that the men who have amassed vast fortunes in the financial and commercial world, and who, in recent years, have posed devotees to art, would sooner or later come together and place grand opera upon the commercialized basis which Maurice Grau created and which solved the operatic problem for the first time.

That men possessed of the business acumen of Otto H. Kahn, Jacob Schiff and Edwin T. Stotesbury, would call a halt on the senseless competition, which has prevailed since the Manhattan Opera House became a factor, was prophesied not only in a previous volume by the writer, but in the prospectus concerning the present issue. The revolution, created by the enormous deficits of the past season at both opera houses, was declared as meaning that ere the season of 1910-11 was inaugurated, an end to the regime where impresarios are at the mercy of overpaid foreign stars, would be recorded.

That Oscar Hammerstein welcomed such a radical change is not to be believed; left to himself, he would have remained adamant and would have fought on until not only his health would have forced his retirement, (as was the case with his predecessors, Maurice Grau and Heinrich Conried), but it would have taken

perhaps one more year of the ruinous policy to so cripple his financial resources, that even the gold laden Victoria Theatre (which, by the way, was the source of supply by which the opera deficits were liquidated), would have passed into other hands.

A material contributing influence in the dethronement of the Wizard-Impresario were his two sons, Arthur and William. Representing, as they do, the rising generation of "showmen," they were not in sympathy with a policy of artistic expansion at so perilous a cost; they were also witnesses to the spectacle of their father's advancing age proceeding amidst a turmoil which they were determined to end, at whatever sacrifice necessary; and it is to Arthur's credit that he persevered in his negotiations with the conflicting interests of the older institution, until, possessed as he was of absolute authority, he effected the momentous "Deal" by which Oscar Hammerstein is relieved for a long time to come from operatic endeavor, the source of manifold cares and worry.

He still controls the Manhattan Opera House, which, because of its superior construction, size and location, will provide a worthy vehicle for the surplus energy of this remarkable man. There are two logical uses to which such a fine structure may be put: First, melodrama on a scale such as prevails at Drury Lane—the very thing the big edifice was built for—, but the second and more practical and profitable plan of operation would be to give New York, what it so pressingly needs, a real Music Hall.

Will Oscar Hammerstein resurrect from the remnants of his grand opera octopus a modern Olympia?

Oscar knows that the time is propitious for such an enterprise; he saw the Victoria Theatre respond

to the very efforts which failed him at his first Long Acre amusement resort, and he is aware that the time is ripe to give the Metropolis an ideal music hall, conducted on the lines of the London Empire or Alhambra.

The writer is of the opinion that the younger generation of Hammersteins will advocate such a policy; they realize, however, that they have to reckon with their father's love of artistic achievement, hence, the subject together with its subsequent issues bids fair to become most interesting.

Inasmuch as Oscar Hammerstein's extraordinary career was fully commented upon in the previous volume, and as the public press is exploiting his achievements conspicuously at this time, there remains only to be added that the place which he has made for himself in the history of music and the drama, will endear his name to the generations yet to come as the wonder-impresario of his time.

We are in the midst of an era of progress, but there is nothing to indicate that, in the present time at least, his place will be easily filled. No one in the operatic realm is possessed of more worthy qualities, more ennobling ambitions and more remarkable energy and accomplishments than the self dethroned impresario, Oscar Hammerstein.



An advance sale of \$51,000 for a week of grand opera in Atlanta, Georgia, is a striking evidence of the condition of the country from a musical standpoint, and it is such that provides the incentive for expansion.

One may not take the retirement of Oscar Hammerstein (which occurred almost simultaneously with

the Atlanta achievement) too seriously. Expansion could best be achieved by checking competition, but St. Paul and Atlanta responding with receipts larger than the average in New York—and that, too, for but one wing of the Metropolitan organization—foreshadows, not only for erection of permanent opera houses in those cities, but also indicates that the local direction is in competent hands.

Will the establishment of grand opera upon a permanent basis in many cities injure the prospect of the regular theatres? Here we have a query, not easily answered. Progress is in proportion to increased population. The day will come, when hippodromes, equal in size and construction to New York's institution, will adorn the larger cities; but when that day comes, the population will increase to an extent, which will permit of absorbing such innovations.

The impression long prevailed that the moving picture theatres were cutting down the patronage of the legitimate theatre, but the managers do not think so. It is not a logical conclusion either, for there are 600 theatres devoted to the present prevailing craze in New York City alone; these theatres seat from 200 to 2,000 each, and it is a fair estimate to state that 600,000 persons are entertained here daily.

Already these patrons want something more than moving pictures, and vaudeville had to be added. In due time the prices had to be raised; sooner or later this ever-increasing audience, greatly created by moving pictures, will want better vaudeville. The result will be that either the theatres will have to be increased in size, or the prices will have to be doubled. When such a condition is in evidence, the public—the 600,000—consisting largely of a newly created clien-

telle, will flock to the regular theatres. The difference in admission price already is small, and the "big time," as such theatres as Percy Williams' and William Morris' are termed, are already feeling the effect of this tremendous influx.

The one problem that is almost fearful to contemplate, lies in the disposition of the many theatres, when the audiences have had a surfeit of cheap vaudeville. There's the rub! The writer believes that, had the manufacturers of films been able to supply the demand for new subjects, vaudeville would never have come into these theatres. A return to moving pictures, and an elimination of vaudeville alone can prevent the loss of the overwhelming patronage created, for it is certain that if sufficient films can be delivered and the prices of admission be sustained at the minimum, then this industry will expand to dimensions never yet deemed possible. The danger lies in the anxiety of a new element among managers (for the moving picture type of showmen lacks theatrical experience), flushed with their first successes, educating their audiences to an extent where they no longer can entertain them at the price of admission prevailing in auditoriums of limited capacity.

CHAPTER III

ADVENT OF THE MAN OF GREAT WEALTH IN MUSICAL AND DRAMATIC MATTERS—WHO WILL BE THE “NEW MOSES” IN THE OPERATIC WORLD?—GRAND OPERA IN ENGLISH—THE NEW THEATRE—CARUSO AND THE PHONOGRAPH.

Within the last ten years there has come into prominence the man of great wealth and public spirit, a boon unknown to the men who tempted fate with important artistic investments in other days. It is true that the old Academy of Music was maintained by a number of New York's representative men of fortune, but discord was ever rampant, and the impresarios connected with its tempestuous career were often the objects of solicitatious anxiety on the part of conscientious sheriffs.

All this is changed now. Up to ten years or so ago, few of our great financiers were willing to give either moral or practical aid to further artistic endeavor, and were it not for such men as William Steinway and George W. Tyson, the highest grade of musical events would have been impossible.

It was when Maurice Grau organized a corporation of his personal friends to give solidity to his lease of the Metropolitan Opera House that conditions, such as now prevail in the artistic world, were created; to-day, in every important city we find men of wealth and influence interested in music and the drama.

Otto H. Kahn, perhaps more than any other single individual, is responsible for the policy which has lately been maintained at New York's leading opera house, and he has also been a veritable factor in the establishment of The New Theatre. Mr. Kahn is a man of much artistic thought and he is ever to be found active in all efforts for artistic expansion; he is approaching middle age with the satisfaction that to his exertion and interest are due the many reforms now prevailing in grand opera presentation.

Of course in the last year or so the financiers, who, up to that time, had disclaimed all desire for pecuniary gain, began to find "the shoe pinching." When it was found that with an overwhelming subscription, the deficit was increasing each year, these gentlemen who have made their immense fortunes by reducing everything to figures, commenced to use their pencils to solve the operatic problem, with the result that a policy of conservatism, based upon an era of expansion, is about to be inaugurated, which will put an end to extravagance.

No other aftermath could be expected from the absurd double-headed consulship, which has prevailed at Fortieth Street and Broadway, and the writer is not one of those who believe that the arrangements perfected for the coming season are for betterment; nor can it be said that the expressions, which have come from Mr. Henry Russell, if he be truly quoted are calculated to give confidence in the forthcoming regime. The spectacle of an impresario in these days of enlightenment, publicly denouncing the honorarium which is meted out to the favorites, created by the public homage, is not one to be commended by a calm and experienced reviewer.

That the deficit at the Metropolitan Opera House for the past season and for the first series of operatic representations at The New Theatre, does not reach colossal proportions, is due solely to the epoch created by a pair of agile Russian dancers who, in the last month of the season, presented the extraordinary spectacle of selling out the capacity of both opera houses at every performance, whatever the opera might be, and no matter who were enrolled in the cast.

Signor G. Gatti Casazza, who has shown himself to be an impresario in the true sense of the term, has been quoted as deploring the re-engagement of Mlle. Pavlowa and Mr. Mordkin and his reasons may well be understood; but, after all, our great financiers are but human and content to grasp—as long as they may—the results, which come from a temporary (it may be found next year that the vogue of these dancers will be greatly reduced), public favor.

Mr. Andreas Dippel is to go to Chicago, and though that city is a severe test for him, it may not be long before he will be found in the director's chair at The Metropolitan Opera House again. At any rate the writer has not observed any shortcomings in his direction of affairs in the Metropolis; he will be more appreciated by the powers that be in another year.

Eben D. Jordan has accomplished, for Boston, results identical to those achieved in New York by Mr. Kahn and the other gentlemen who compose the board of directors of the Opera House and The New Theatre. Mr. Jordan's efforts antedate the inauguration of The Boston Opera House, for he was ever a patron of the musical and dramatic arts, and he has done more to encourage and uplift music in New

England than has ever been credited to him. His efforts, too, have long since been regarded as of international value, and now that the Boston Opera House has been inaugurated, one may well wonder as to the direction Mr. Jordan's next progressive move will take.

Henry M. Higginson to whom Boston owes its symphony orchestra, is identified with so many projects, which have for their purpose the betterment of musical conditions, and his altruistic efforts have been the subject of so much comment in the public press, that it remains only for the writer to observe that to him is due the credit, not alone of his Boston achievements, for he has also provided the incentive in other cities for musical endeavor, and his name will be written large in musical history.

In Philadelphia there are several gentlemen, who in the last few years, have given practical aid in the fostering of difficult artistic undertakings; but the one to be here named is Edwin T. Stotesbury who has come forward many times and prevented disaster to various musical enterprises. It is to him alone that Philadelphia has had to look for a completion of the past season of opera at the Philadelphia Opera House.

Oscar Hammerstein has never posed as seeking financial aid and he has, throughout his exampled career, shown himself to be a veritable magician in the financing of his prodigious affairs, but lately he has lost patience with the Philadelphia public and he has not relished the spectacle of a large guarantee being meted out to the Metropolitan Opera House Company. They, after all, are but incidental and occasional visitors to the Quaker City, whereas the

doughty Oscar has given Philadelphia a palatial opera house, which can be used perhaps fifty or sixty nights a year and is useless as an investment otherwise; hence, he was compelled to serve an ultimatum, which resulted in Mr. Stotesbury personally facing the deficit of the last few weeks of the season, amounting to about \$40,000. This is by no means the end of this gentleman's benefactions, for the future of Philadelphia's permanent opera scheme is even now dependent on him.

The foregoing was written many days before the announcement of Mr. Oscar Hammerstein's retirement from the field of grand opera, and the writer has not found it necessary because of this momentous development to change one word or subtract one iota from what has been here expressed. Emphasis is given, through the new arrangements, to the influence which the man of wealth now wields in operatic affairs.

The advent of Mr. Stotesbury as an impresario in Philadelphia, with a controlling interest in the permanent opera schemes of other cities, is simply an illustration of the era we are now entering upon. The policy of expansion is, as a result, greatly strengthened, the outcome can only show a renaissance of grand opera in the large cities in the next five years.

In Chicago Mr. John C. Shaffer, a prominent newspaper publisher, is the good samaritan who is responsible for the addition of Chicago to the cities in this country where permanent grand opera shall prevail, and thus it is possible for a triumvirate of opera houses to amalgamate for the good of all. With Herr Andreas Dippel at the helm in the "windy city," aided by Bernhard Ulrich (whose achievement in Baltimore

caused him to be selected for the post of business manager), the middle West is indeed to be congratulated.

The writer believes that ere another lustrum passes, opera houses such as those in Boston and Philadelphia, will be found in all the cities with a population in excess of 500,000; though, unless vogue is found for a national opera presenting works of all nationalities in the vernacular, it is not easy to foretell, where the artists of the first rank are to come from to uphold all of these establishments at the present high grade demanded by a public, gradually educated to appreciate the best only.

Music has not monopolized all of the attention of our public-spirited citizens; nor have all of our patronizing millionaires confined their benefactions and investments to that worthy field. The large vested interests of the Messrs. Shubert have been made possible greatly through their association with two prominent gentlemen from Cincinnati, George B. Cox and Joseph L. Rhinock.

Both are prominent, politically and socially, in their native city, and Mr. Rhinock has lately given to his theatrical investments that attention which comes only from profitable results. No man that can be here recalled has so ingratiated himself with those whom he has come in contact with, as this same Mr. Rhinock, and it is to be hoped that his unassuming manners, together with his innate modesty, may prove to be contagious in the district about 39th Street and Broadway.

Mr. Cox comes East less frequently, but one hears much of his fame in other fields, and it is known that

he is a "good loser," a quality rare indeed among those who bring their capital into theatrical use.

Felix Isman would make an ideal subject for a volume issued with a view to providing an incentive for the rising generation of showmen. Here we have the true type of a self-made man, who has made his impress, too, in a very short period. Still a young man, his operations are on such an enlarged scale, and his undertakings are so widely and often so anonymously distributed, that a recital of them is almost impossible; but it may be here stated that at least two of the largest theatrical concerns in this country, at a crucial period, not so very long ago, were tided over by him, and not only was disaster prevented, but they were permitted, by this procedure, to survive and even expand—such is Felix Isman.

The Opera Trust, for such it is, has been created solely through the evils of the competitive season of 1909-10, which caused both of our Metropolitan operatic institutions to face deficits of such enormous size that a crisis could only be averted by a community of interests, and that this has resulted in Mr. Hammerstein's withdrawal, unquestionably for all time, from activity in the broader field of opera, is greatly to be regretted. The writer had hoped that the revolutionary movement which he has been constantly prophesying, would come about through Mr. Hammerstein's assuming the director's chair of The Metropolitan Opera House. Perhaps he was offered this honor and declined it! Another year will decide whether the problem was a purely financial one, or whether the real trouble has been the want of an impresario, possessing the showmanship (and there is no other word

to convey the writer's meaning), with which a dividend policy can be maintained at what, from now on, is to be New York's only opera house.

But does the elimination of the public-spirited Oscar mean the end of all opposition to the organized interests which have at last come together, and have placed grand opera on a par with United States Steel and Amalgamated Copper? Will the Wall Street method prove operative to regulate matters so that the desires of the moneyed interests will be obtained? If the intention is to establish a lower honorarium for the stars who have created for themselves a potency all over the world, the plan will miss fire; for it is not likely that the high standard created through the Hammerstein era will be permitted to pass, or even to be deviated from, as there is too much demand in European capitals for these celebrities. Besides, the most of our famous opera stars are wealthy; they prefer Europe to America as a place of residence, and there is not likely to be a material difference in the figures offered them abroad, where such singers as Caruso, Bonci, Tetrizzini and Mary Garden already receive almost as much as here.

Who shall say that a "new Moses" will not come upon the scene? There is nothing to indicate that the elimination of the opposition of 1909 does not mean the creation of a still more powerful competition in 1911.

"The handwriting on the wall" predicts that it will be impossible to conciliate all the box and seat holders of the Manhattan Opera House within the limits of the almost sold-out Metropolitan. A similar condition prevails in Philadelphia with the Academy stockholders and the subscribers of the New Opera House. This

is a serious matter, for is it not recalled that the Metropolitan Opera House came into being, because a new generation of millionaires resented the monopoly of the "old fogies" at the old Academy?

The Manhattan Opera House still stands, and while Oscar may not be permitted to open its doors to grand opera himself, the superb edifice can be leased, or bought even, by any new faction which the interesting situation of to-day is sure to develop; Philadelphia's Academy is an asset in the same direction. Then there is The Academy of Music in New York, leased by a moving picture magnate, William Fox, who has shown in his operations that the fortune he is accumulating in that field, will be put to a far broader use. Who knows but that the dear old Auditorium, located though it be in the downtown section, may not house a national opera scheme?

Besides, there are real impresarios to reckon with, such as Mr. Savage and the Aborns, men who stand for grand opera in English uncompromisingly, and who possess ample ammunition to qualify, in the event of new conditions being created.

The Opera Trust is not immune to the progress created in the last few years; a new "Napoleon of opera" has advantages far greater than Oscar Hammerstein had when he showed such intrepidity as to attempt to compete with the Metropolitan Opera House. The next operatic warrior can find a responsive mood for his ambitions in all the growing cities, such as Pittsburg, St. Louis, Cincinnati, Denver, Minneapolis and St. Paul.

It will be far easier for an impresario possessing capacity for operatic direction to put up a battle with the scions of Wall Street, than it was for William Morris

the independent vaudeville magnate who shoved a roll-top booking desk in front of the noses of the millionaire vaudeville combine and "beat them to it," to such an extent that to-day he is in the position to control, single-handed, a chain of theatres quite as large as that which he is competing with.

Opera is not a commodity; it cannot be cornered. A new singer appears on the horizon as fast as others are acclaimed by the public. Nothing is surer than that the new conditions prevailing, as a result of the reduction of the limitations of grand opera through stock and bond operations, will create the long-desired national opera.

The situation is full of promise; perhaps two years will be required for the new policy of the Metropolitan Opera House and its affiliations to assert itself. It may take another year, perhaps two for the sequel to be demonstrated. The readers of this volume will live to see grand opera in English, an established vogue in more cities, upon a permanent basis, than was ever recorded for all other modes of operatic presentation since the beginning of time.



Now that the signs point to a revival of grand opera in English, an important element arises in the query: "Who will be the impresario?"

A response to which is best effected with still another question: "Who is the most fit?"

Surely no foreign impresario can answer, not even Mr. Henry Russell, the Englishman. His inclinations and obligations are so palpably for the Latin article, that it would be unfair to put to a test the scales of opera in English with any impresario who is not, and

has not been an achiever in that field; furthermore, only an American can properly qualify, for in order to attain the results which modern times require, a musical knowledge is not half as important as that the American "get up and go" style be thoroughly possessed by the entrepreneur.

The two greatest impresarios of this generation were men of this class; both have passed away. The fate of English grand opera must be vested in some one who will not look down upon it as inferior, which is just what will happen, if any Signor or Monsieur direct its progress.

The writer believes there are just two men in all America capable of doing justice to the seriousness of the project, and yet be expected to weather the storms and survive the prejudices which are sure to be encountered in any effort to perpetuate a National Opera.

These two men are Henry W. Savage and Milton Aborn, and both qualify for distinctly different reasons. Mr. Savage came into the amusement world by sheer accident and had a managerial career thrust upon him, but, given the right man, this would only be a circumstance in his favor. Savage, to be brief, began his career with what came under the category of cheap opera at the Castle Square Theatre, but he gave opera that was cheap only in price of admission, and, on tour, he added, year after year, to the constructive side of his worthy organization, until the name of Savage stands for the best to be had.

He it was who first presented "La Bohème" in America in any language, and the same may be said for his production of "Madame Butterfly." He demonstrated with this opera that he could go about the

country giving seven performances a week at prices for seats almost as high as obtained at the Metropolitan Opera House, and yet have but one opera to attract with, and this given in English. This was an achievement which only a Yankee could effect, and the daring which characterized the Savage presentation of Wagner's "Parsifal," as to investment; and the policy of attempting to operate a classical work such as this one was, upon purely theatrical lines, could only have been indulged in by a man of Savage's courage and tenacity of purpose, not to speak of the necessity of sacrificing a fortune if all went wrong. But all did not go wrong; New York City preferred to pay \$10 a seat for the Conried "Parsifal," but in other cities the Savage production was profitable, often phenomenally so.

But the career of this man outside of grand opera is a far better criterion, which need not be recited here, save that his influence in London, Paris and Vienna is now so powerful that those who are pleased to compete with him in the search for novelties in both musical and dramatic fields, have practically left him in absolute control.

It is not known whether Mr. Savage would re-enter the operatic arena, though he has often been heard to express himself to the effect that only a national opera can solve the problem of our opera houses; whether he would be willing, like Oscar Hammerstein, to finance such a vast undertaking, is perhaps known only to himself. It is not likely, however, that the impresario would be called upon to shoulder all of the responsibility. This is an age of public spirit, and in every large city is to be found at

least one multi-millionaire who will "come across" for great musical endeavor. Oscar, himself, has this year been helped by the generous bestowals of Mr. Edwin T. Stotesbury and other Philadelphia capitalists, and he had the assurance of further aid in the same locale; therefore, it is to be assumed that the financial side of the problem of English opera is capable of a solution.

Milton Aborn can qualify as an impresario for a national opera by right of conquest. A decade ago he was the comedian in a cheap opera company, giving continuous performances at Keith's Union Square Theatre. He was a pretty bad comedian, too, about as bad as was necessary for his environment. Afterwards he became the manager, as well as the comedian, of his own opera company and began to show so much more ability as a director than he did as an actor, that he decided to discharge himself from the latter capacity. His artistic standard grew, year after year, until to-day he is, by all manner of means, the leading and only prominent managerial figure in America devoted to the presentation of grand opera in English.

In the spring of each year Mr. Aborn organizes from five to eight really high-class stock opera companies, and the calibre of these have improved annually until they now have reached a standard of excellence, which has opened up to Mr. Aborn any theatre in any city he may desire.

This year he has been honored by the owners of the New Boston Opera House, and is conducting a season there in which the highest type of opera is rendered in English with the best artists available, at prices of admission within the reach of all. The same policy is prevailing at McVicker's Theatre in Chicago,

and Mr. Aborn is giving opera in English simultaneously in Milwaukee, Pittsburg, Newark and other cities.

The announcement has been made that the Messrs. Aborn are to present Balfe's "Bohemian Girl" in spectacular form and with a star cast, while these pages are in press.

Surely here we have a man capable of representing any public-spirited body of capitalists who wish to foster a national opera revival.

Had Mr. Converse's opera "The Pipe of Desire" been rendered in an opera house devoted solely to opera in English, and been cast by an American impresario with artists who did not seem to be ashamed of their surroundings, that work would have met with a different fate; if Mr. Victor Herbert's new opera is sacrificed in similar fashion, whose will the fault be?

Mr. Herbert undoubtedly aspires to have his first grand opera sung by the stars of our opera houses, and if he had a choice as between these and a national opera company, directed by either Mr. Savage or Mr. Aborn, would he decide in favor of the latter? No! Yet we will prate of nationalism in music and the drama.

The New Theatre has no greater enemies than the American playwrights whom it really seeks to benefit, but how many of our now generally accepted writers of successful plays will give The New Theatre the preference or priority in the presentation of their new works? Not one! They take their plays to the producer who will guarantee to present them consecutively and continually. No repertory theatre for them. That means art solely, whereas they prefer to be artful, which is all right, too. But why all this hypocrisy?

It is almost inconceivable that The New Theatre should possess the ill will of so many to whom its survival should mean a veritable boon, but it is nevertheless a fair statement to declare that no enterprise, having for its object the betterment of the condition of the player and the playwright, has ever been involved in so much antagonism and back-biting as have been directed against the institution on Central Park West.

That this condition is due to the rivalry between the two booking syndicates, one of which is headed by the present business manager of The New Theatre, is not to be doubted. The partisans of each are arrayed in the defensive and offensive sides, yet it would seem that a desire for the ultimate success of an undertaking, meaning so much for all, would at least be openly unanimous. However, there is little comfort for those who predict a fiasco.

The present era is not one of retrogression; the men who have come forward and dedicated this structure to artistic endeavor, have shown so much patience and their public spirit has been demonstrated too vigorously, to permit of the merest suggestion of failure. The results of the first season were far better than had been hoped for, and there is every reason to expect that another year will see such strides effected, that the enemies of progress will stand aside and look on in amazement.

Such is The New Theatre! Its most active head, Winthrop Ames, is just the sort of man from whom one may anticipate the most remarkable results, and if, at the end of another year, the general public is not found responsive to his efforts, he will go right on as he did in Boston.

Mr. Ames will not fail, The New Theatre and its policy is for all time; its absolute success is assured.



After Caruso—who?

When the rumors started in Paris that Jean De Reszke's voice had undergone a change, just before his last season in America, there was the usual contradiction, and none of us can forget the memorable night at The Metropolitan Opera House, when, after a year's absence, the great Polish tenor was heard as Lohengrin; there was still the finished artist in evidence, still the most exquisite phrasing, but it was not the Jean of old!

All of that last season it was sentiment and a loyal public that sustained this superb artist; nature alone would have accounted for Jean's inability to longer disguise the ravages which time had performed on his vocal organ, for at this period he had passed his fiftieth year. We have to thank the artistic pride with which he was possessed that a repetition of the sad spectacle, presented by Mario, Tamberlik and Sims Reeves, was not permitted; although Jean was offered \$3,000 a night to return, he vowed that his public career was at an end.

In the summer of 1909 Enrico Caruso, though much younger than his colleague, was forced to undergo an operation of such character as made the knowing musician shake his head. The rumors once started, for months the entire musical world was agitated.

On the night that Caruso reappeared at The Metropolitan, a replica of the scenes which characterized the memorable De Reszke event, were recorded, perhaps

in a lesser degree; but he is an optimist who will deny that the season of 1909-10 did not disclose slight evidences of retrogression in that wonderful voice.

In that season the illustrious Italian faced empty seats for the first time since the year of his American debut, and by the same method of reasoning, the public of the cities visited, when the opera company was on tour in the spring, responded less emphatically at the box office on Caruso nights than on other important occasions. This is a barometer indeed, for outside of New York the tendency to worship at the shrine of a celebrity is more pronounced than in the Metropolis.

Have we the phonograph to thank for a reduction in the period, which Caruso may conjure with his glorious artistry?

Surely the benefit which future generations will obtain by the preservation of his vocal records, has been dearly bought, if his power to sway audiences to-day is diminished as the result; yet, any one who has ever been present at the fatiguing and nerve-racking seances when these records are taken, will comprehend that the penalty must be paid in due time.

Adelina Patti never sang for a phonograph company! It is true that her voice had been greatly impaired before this remarkable invention was placed on the market, but, nevertheless, she was offered fabulous sums to sing for each of the existing corporations in this field, and always declined.

I yield to no one in appreciation of the great benefits derived from the phonograph, and have often regretted that the voices of Malibran, Mario, Jenny Lind, Wachtel and others were not similarly preserved, but

if my theory as to Caruso is a correct one—and it serves as a caution to a younger generation of singers—this recital may not be wholly in vain!

And who, may I ask, will be the magnet at the Metropolitan when, heaven forbid! Caruso ceases to exercise his sway there? We know that for five years he has been able to draw a \$10,000 house, three and four times a week, also that aside from the subscription, none of the other singers, or in fact not all of them combined, can draw a paying audience to the Opera House!

Is it not a pity then, that even one year less of Caruso should be the penalty we have to pay in order that future generations may have preserved for them the records of his marvelous voice?

But that very phonograph may be stated to have realized what is perhaps the most significant achievement in the history of music. It has developed a condition that will lead to national opera; already a municipal opera company is being organized and rehearsed by Mr. Albert Mildenberg, an instructor in Mrs. Ely's singing school in Carnegie Hall. In the preliminary trial of voices it was discovered that among the shop girls and lay workers of whom the organization is composed, a large number had educated themselves through the means of the phonograph, not only musically, but also had actually mastered the Latin languages. This is a most amazing revelation, and full of significance. It will be from just such a start as Mr. Mildenberg is making that grand opera will be popularized for the masses. I understand that Signor Bonci is a backer and one of the founders of this enterprise, which provides for performances of a half dozen operatic works this coming winter.

Henry W. Savage has recently expressed himself again, even more forcibly than before, that only through a national opera can we change the environment of our opera houses from a fad to a veritable musical renaissance.

CHAPTER IV

SOME TRUTHS ABOUT THE TENDENCY OF THE STAGE TO-DAY—THE WAY TO DISCOVER WHO IS THE BRAINS OF A DUO—THIS IS THE ERA OF ACHIEVEMENTS!—THE TICKET SPECULATOR.

**SOME TRUTHS ABOUT THE TENDENCY OF
THE STAGE TO-DAY.**

It is remarkable what results one may arrive at by retrospection, and it is almost inconceivable that a conclusion should be reached after putting one's memory to a test, which places practically all of the great and stellar artistic careers that endure in the field of the theatre upon a quarter of a century basis. To be more concise, an effort to search for modern achievement disclosed the fact that more than 90 per cent of the great names or rather celebrities whose fame enables a manager to attract his public, were in evidence twenty-five years ago and had then, too, begun their stellar careers. The few who have arrived at stellar heights in the last two decades have as a rule done so in the musical comedy field or in the very lightest forms of drama. The day has passed when one can ask for a successor to Booth, Forest, Barrett or even McCullough. It is enough to ask if another Mansfield is in sight. In all the English-speaking world to-day, there is not one woman on the stage who is even indicating an aspiration to the tragic goal attained by Rachel, Bernhardt or Duse. Here we point to a half

century of stellar accomplishment, and the light is provided solely by what remains of the careers of foreign celebrities who have endured more than three decades. Modernism has either obliterated the ambitions for classical achievement or its few possible exponents have succumbed to it.

Ellen Terry, Julia Marlowe and a few others calculated to preserve the best traditions of the stage, but who are to-day no longer presented in the classics which gave them fame, have been before the public as stars for more than twenty-five years, and yet there has been no succession to their artistry. Mrs. Fiske, than whom there is no more perfect illustrative example, holds sway as of yore, but look where we will there is not the slightest sign that her successor will be found when she elects to bring her long and unexampled career to a close.

Richard Mansfield left no heir to his mantle, and the superb repertoire with which he was wont to enthrall, has been obliterated from stage use because of an utter inability to find in all the world a player who could preserve the qualities with which he invested the roles that gave him fame.

Charles Frohman, always alert to provide new stellar material, and who furnishes the best incentive for artistic endeavor, has been able to reveal but one addition to stardom, in Ethel Barrymore and she is truly an inheritance, a genuine successor to her illustrious parents, Maurice and Georgia Drew Barrymore. All of Mr. Frohman's stars have been before the public longer than is necessary to record, and if one will but make an observation of the class of play or spectacle, which in this era is able to attract, no other conclusion can be arrived at than that the tendency is for

the lighter form of amusement. We have yet our Belascos and from the playwright's standpoint never before was the American author so prolific or so potent, but great individual players, the kind that a public was wont to rave over, where shall we look for them? Who will provide the successors of our present reigning stars, who even though they are not seen to-day in the more classical of their achievements, at least their old-time personalities are still with us, and there is no need to deny it, they are without competition from the rising generation of stage workers.

The New Theatre now fairly developed on its career has presented to the naked eye no indication that from its ennobling enterprise will emanate the stage monarchs of another generation. The most that can be hoped for is the preservation in an indeterminate form of the last resort to prevent the utter extinction of the one and only incentive for true artistic endeavor, the stock company, which here alone in a metropolis containing more than fifty playhouses finds even partial exploitation.

Will the survival of the crop of modern playwrights compensate for the obsolescence of what for centuries has been the vital force of the stage? Will the oblivion to which has been cast all but the memories of great individual figures, reveal instead a perfect ensemble presentation? There can be no question as to the changes which another generation will be called upon to record, but one cannot prophesy at this time what is to become of the immortal works of the greatest writers of all time, if there be no interpreters of the tremendous chief roles which all of their masterpieces contain. About the only striking possibility of the revelation of a great tragic actress in the future is

suggested in the hope that David Belasco will bring forward a greater Nance O'Neill. Serious thinkers in the field of the theatre have long known that this tall, awkward girl, combined the superlative qualities of Mary Anderson and Clara Morris, and the announcement that David Belasco, who kindled the divine spark in Mrs. Leslie Carter, was to be responsible for her future career, has caused the one ray of hope that through the coming into her own of Nance O'Neill there may be a revival of some of the works for which she is by nature so peculiarly fitted, and with their production provide at least a perpetuation of their grandeur instead of utter obsolescence.



I have always maintained that the real compelling force in a firm or body of managers could only be determined when they separated, whether from any disagreement or from the fact that one had passed away.

That great managerial duo, Jarrett and Palmer, was an instance of the truth of this statement. As long as Harry Palmer lived, the operations of the firm were upon a colossal scale, and enormous profits were derived, but immediately upon his demise an utter change was effected. Mr. Jarrett, who was one of the most charming personalities of his day, became so helpless without the aid and advice of his erstwhile associate that his career henceforth was notable only for the vicissitudes which characterized it.

So it was with Brooks and Dickson; the former not only rallied from the effects of the failure of the original firm, but he survived to become one of the wealthiest and most prolific producers in this country. He has been a manager, too, for more than forty years,

and at no time were his activities greater than they are to-day.

The firm of Weber and Fields were always prominent in a managerial way, long before they reached the Broadway district. The two began in the humblest way, starting in the very specialty which gave them their fame, in resorts on the East Side and Coney Island. As soon as they were generally accepted by the public and had reached a salary basis of \$300 a week jointly, they decided to engage themselves with the result that they began touring the country at the head of their own specialty organization, which prospered for years. Then they added to their investments, until one day they secured a lease of what had been The Imperial Music Hall, where George Krauss had presented programmes of high-class vaudeville that will stand comparison with any to be seen to-day. Krauss did not prosper, nor was the project of Weber and Fields regarded with any great optimism, when their announcement became public, but they had the nucleus of a remarkable company of comedians in themselves, Charles J. Ross, Mabel Fenton, Sam Bernard, Peter F. Dailey, David Warfield, John T. Kelly and others; they gave an olio that could not be duplicated to-day in all the world, and to this was added, as the inauguration of their main policy, a travesty on "The Geisha," then in the height of its run next door, at Daly's Theatre. This, their first burlesque, was called "The Geezer," and was the joint effort of Joseph W. Herbert and John Stromberg.

The success was sensational, and Weber and Fields' bijou theatre at once came to be a fad; the prices were raised to the highest charged in New York; the per-

formances grew in calibre; the olio was discarded and the era of the dialect comedian created.

From this auspicious start developed much theatrical history. The starring tours of Sam Bernard and David Warfield being a direct result of their vogue at the little theatre, to which they came practically unknown, save to their own constituency, and emerged to become, the one the idol of Broadway, the other the most successful star, before the public, whose character of Von Barwig in "The Music Master" will rank in theatrical history as a worthy successor to the Rip Van Winkle of Joseph Jefferson.

Weber and Fields separated for reasons which need not be recited. The announcement was the cause of universal regret; the general public in particular deplored the necessity for such a procedure. Many efforts were made to revive the duo, even when both had been going it alone and neither had shown benefit from the parting, but the efforts of friends to bring about a reunion were in vain. The vaudeville managers, as is their wont, tried to tempt the favorites back to their old field with offers of first \$2,000 and finally \$3,000 a week—but the two went their ways separately.

Lew Fields, after having passed through many vicissitudes, has become the most important as well as the most successful producer of musical comedy in this country; he has also extended his operations into other fields and his interests, at this time, are as large as that of any individual operating in the amusement world.

Mr. Fields has two Broadway theatres, The Herald Square and The Broadway; despite the fact that the rental of the latter has been regarded as prohibitive.

and that the house had been abandoned by Mr. Fields' predecessor as impossible of profitable maintenance, the regime of Lew Fields has been extraordinary in results.

With "The Midnight Sons," receipts of \$15,000 a week were so common as to excite no comment, while the recent attraction, "The Jolly Bachelors," recorded similar results. The discernment which this producer has shown, is demonstrated by the surplus of successes to his credit; in fact, since Mr. Fields first came to The Herald Square with "The Girl Behind the Counter," a vehicle which is still able to conjure, he has known no failure. He is one of the hardest workers in the amusement world. It is almost inconceivable that so much effort can come from so frail a body; it is a common practice for him to go, grip in hand, after a performance in New York, in which he has played the principal part, to other cities where he has attractions, to observe a matinee or rehearsal and to return to New York in time to play his role the next evening. That Mr. Fields still continues to appear himself in his productions, considering the enormity of his responsibilities, is the most amazing thing of all.

Joseph Weber has retained the little theatre to which the writer has referred, and it has passed through a varied career since the popular duo went their different ways. For several years Mr. Weber continued to make productions of a character similar to those made by the two jointly. The first departure was when "The Merry Widow" was taken practically intact; by an arrangement with Mr. Savage the "travesty" was permitted. The most important production made by Mr. Weber as an individual manager was "The Cli-

max," a play with music, in which four characters, each ably presented, were the sole magnet. This interesting work was discovered, however, by Walter N. Lawrence, a manager to whom posterity owes much, for he has unearthed more worthy works by unknown authors than any other man of his time. Mr. Lawrence took the Madison Square Theatre when it was regarded as a veritable morgue, evolving there such successes as "Mrs. Temple's Telegram" and "The Prince Chap."

But to return to Mr. Weber. Because so few characters were required for "The Climax," which had a long metropolitan run, he sent out a half dozen companies with the piece, but, as has often been demonstrated before, an entourage based upon cheapness rarely prospers. When the public is apathetic, reduced expenses avail little, hence the result from the tours of these six companies did not greatly increase Mr. Weber's bank account, of late the pretty little theatre has housed a number of plays launched with the idea of duplicating the success achieved by "The Girl from Rector's," yet, as evidence that the public taste for suggestive plays is but fleeting, none of these productions have scored to a very vigorous extent. Much is expected from a musical farce, entitled "Alma, Wo Wohnst Du?" which Adolph Phillip, the German comedian who achieved a 500 night run with his "Groceryman of Avenue B" in German, has been presenting for a long period in the Yorkville district with much acclaim.

It surely is significant that two theatres long identified with these salacious stage offerings should find its public indifferent, for Mr. Weber has brought back to his own stage that purest of plays, "The Climax,"

while at The New York Theatre, where, owing to the activity of Mayor Gaynor, "The Girl with the Whooping Cough" has been forcibly taken from its boards and replaced by the cleanest and also the funniest of musical comedies "The Three Twins."

The need of a censor for stage offerings will not be very great, if we have such men as Mayor Gaynor long with us, for he has shown discernment and a catholic fairness up to this time in these matters. In the case of "Alma, Wo Wohnst Du?" the Mayor was careful to do no injustice to Herr Adolph Phillip, who had his capital and future at stake. There was surely no justification for classing this delicious comedy among the objectionable plays. In Yorkville it drew entire families for months, and I have not observed anything approaching indecency in the German production, unless it be the title itself. Speaking of titles, Mr. Al Woods is going the limit. He is also getting into a maelstrom of litigation, and as a result three of his productions, in different parts of the country, were subjected to police interference on the same night; in at least two of these the titles of the production and perhaps the printing displayed gave far greater offense than the performances on the stage.

There is, however, no record of any particular prosperity enjoyed by the purveyors of the salacious article; "Seven Days" or "The Lottery Man" will outlast any of the "girl" plays and make their producers wealthy as well; for productions such as "The Girl with the Whooping Cough" involve not only large investments, but require an organization of large proportions. Even "The Queen of the Moulin Rouge," supposedly the most successful of all, was involved in difficulties when its vogue was greatest.

That this has been a generation of practically all achievement is demonstrated by an authoritative presentation of the contrast, as exemplified by the early efforts of those now prominent in all walks of the stage, when compared with their present status, or that which they held when their careers came to an end.

The late Maurice Grau was a libretto boy at The Academy of Music, others who sold books of the opera at a later period, were Gus Bothner who, for twenty years or more, has found a vogue for Charles Hoyt's first effort, "A Bunch of Keys," also Lee Harrison, who gave no indication that he would become a high salaried comedian, and Dave Robinson, now one of Percy Williams' most valued resident managers, as well as manager of the new Brighton Theatre at Brighton Beach.

Edward Harrigan was a ship calker at San Francisco before he met Tony Hart; B. F. Keith was a circus "privilege" man, while his general manager, E. F. Albee, was known as a "squarer" in the white tented field, long before the era of the continuous performance, S. Z. Poli, now owner of a dozen palatial vaudeville theatres, was a sculptor at the Eden Musee, and began his New Haven prosperity with a musee of his own.

William Harris, of the Theatrical Syndicate, began as a song-and-dance man, and his son, H. B. Harris, as an advance agent; A. L. Erlanger was a commercial traveler thirty years ago and treasurer of John Ellsler's Theatre in Cleveland, Ohio, his home city, before he came to New York to make theatrical history.

Frank McKee was a lithographer for circuses a quarter of a century ago; F. F. Proctor was an acro-

bat, one of the Levantine Brothers. His partner, named Mansfield, also became a theatrical manager. All of the Shuberts started as boys in the theatres of Syracuse, N. Y.

William Morris who, unaided, has fought the combined vaudeville interests of this country and become himself the most interesting and one of the most important figures in the vaudeville field, came here from Germany a poor boy and began as an advertising solicitor, afterwards securing a position in George Liman's vaudeville agency on East 14th Street.

Jules Murry, who has amassed a fortune through unique methods of management, emigrated here from Munich and met Herr Conried in Baltimore, and began his career with that director. Harry Powers, manager of Powers' Theatre in Chicago, started as an usher in that very house, and has occupied every possible position in the same theatre, before he became its head.

Augustus Thomas was assistant treasurer of Pope's Theatre in St. Louis in 1881, and first attracted attention as a player. "Editha's Burglar," first presented by amateurs as a one-act playlet, and afterward enlarged into a full evening performance, was the vehicle which started him in his career of playwright.

Francis Wilson was one of a team of song-and-dance men five and thirty years ago, and came into prominence in a musical play, written by William Gill and entitled "Our Goblins."

James T. Powers also started in varieties and once played at Huber's Museum, as did Clarice Vance. David Warfield was an usher in a San Francisco theatre.

George M. Cohan was a violin prodigy at the age

of five, and his nimble feet first availed him a few years later in a Hibernicon entertainment which his father, Jerry Cohan, toured with in the early 80's. Samuel Harris, his partner, started as a projector of fistic events.

Jules Hurtig and Morris Gest, as stated elsewhere, were ticket speculators, while Harry Seamon, Mr. Hurtig's partner, was a club swinger, a line of endeavor in which Gus Hill, one of the wealthiest of our managers, was once unexcelled.

William H. Crane was a baritone in his youth, and was apprenticed to the Holman Opera Company. Bessie Abbott was one of the waifs in Rice's "1492," before she was placed under Jean De Reszke's tuition.

Marc Klaw was a newspaper man in Louisville, Ky., being the dramatic critic of the Commercial in that city; and Charles E. Kohl, the millionaire vaudeville magnate of Chicago, was the pioneer of dime museums in the West, and his great fortune was founded in that field.

Martin Beck was a German actor not so very long ago, and has passed through sufficient vicissitudes to entitle him to all the credit that is justly his for having become the central figure in the Western vaudeville situation with an extreme likelihood that, ere these pages are read he will have begun his Eastern campaign.

Max Anderson, once a partner of the Shuberts, himself a wealthy vaudeville magnate, was once a glass blower; Charles Burnham was an usher in Daly's Theatres, and Thomas F. Shea who manages the Empire Theatre for Charles Frohman, held a similar position under the same manager.

Julius Cahn sold opera books in Cincinnati in his youth and was with Alice Oates' Opera Company in the heyday of her artistic career.

Joseph Brooks was always a manager or agent as far back as his career can be traced; he was one of the firm which preceded the present so-called Theatrical Syndicate in their efforts to systematize the amusement business.

Florenz Ziegfeld first became prominent in Chicago during the World's Fair, where he presented phenomenal vaudeville bills at The Trocadero (not the house of that name in use to-day).

William A. Brady was a call boy in California theatres, Colonel Henry W. Savage was a real estate speculator in Boston, and had management thrust upon him.

Sam Bernard began in the Grand Duke's Opera House in Baxter Street, New York, and Weber and Fields started in similar resorts in this city and vicinity.

Maurice Campbell was on the staff of the New York World, before he conducted the tours of his wife (Henrietta Crosman); Theodore Liebler was a theatrical printer, as was also John Springer.

Anna Held came to this country as a Chanteuse and first appeared at The Herald Square Theatre in "A Parlor Match," in which Evans and Hoey starred.

Donald Robertson, who appeared as Beethoven at The New Theatre, sang and acted the role of the Duke in Audran's operetta "Olivette," he having married the star, Miss Catherine Lewis.

John G. Jermon, owner of theatres in Philadelphia, and also a great factor in the burlesque field, was an

actor thirty years ago; James Forbes, who wrote "The Chorus Lady" and "The Traveling Salesman," and has scored his third great success with a new effort, "The Commuters," was in charge of the publicity department of Colonel Savage's Castle Square Garden Company, when that organization appeared for a lengthy term at the American Theatre. Mr. Forbes has not permitted his great prosperity to change his environment, for he is still wont to evolve "stories" for the press, and is H. B. Harris' guiding spirit in the direction of his theatres and attractions.

Time certainly does work remarkable changes in the show world! I recall going into Colonel Austin's Nickolodeon in Boston—the original five-cent theatre, by the way—one day very long ago. Al Haynes was the manager and William L. Dockstader put on the after pieces; up one flight, whom do you suppose I found running the glass blower's stand? None other than Max Anderson, erstwhile partner of the Shuberts in the Hippodrome enterprise and a millionaire magnate in the Western vaudeville field of to-day! Up on the next floor, in the fortune teller's booth, was M. R. Sheedy, now a wealthy manager of a chain of Eastern vaudeville theatres, while on the top floor, in jacket and apron, making wax figures, was S. Z. Poli, who owns outright a dozen amusement palaces in the larger Eastern cities!

Verily, we are in the age of achievement! About the same time Messrs. Keith and Albee were "privilege" men in the circus field; Sam Hodgdon was the lecturer who eulogized the merits of the tattooed man and the human ostrich in the museum halls!

The subject of speculation in tickets for places of amusement is one that has at all times aroused public

interest, and an impartial treatise of both sides of the situation would seemingly be in order.

As far back as the memory of the writer can go, there has been speculation in seats at theatres, operas and concerts, and the problem has at all times rested with the public for solution. When Jenny Lind gave her concerts at Castle Garden, the ticket speculator was as great a factor as he is to-day, though not as numerous or as boisterous.

The leading figure in this line of endeavor forty years ago was Frederick Rullmann who, for a generation, had offices at 111 and 114 Broadway; and to this day his son of the same name continues at the latter address. The elder Rullmann cut a wide swath in his day, and for more than twenty years it was impossible for any impresario to maintain an enterprise without his aid, which was often given, too, when the element of risk greatly exceeded that of possible profit.

In those days there were perhaps a half dozen ticket speculators to be found outside of the theatres of this metropolis. They were not licensed, and were of a far superior calibre to those of the present time.

Joseph Seagrist, who died a decade ago, was the best known of this gentry; he was indeed a unique character. He would always retain for himself the best seat available at the opera, and, as soon as he had disposed of his tickets, would hie himself to a neighboring hotel, whence he would emerge shortly, clad in gorgeous attire (who will ever forget the spectacle of "old Joe" in his blue dress coat with massive brass buttons) and betake himself to the Academy of Music, or Steinway Hall, where a Patti or a Nilsson would be singing. He would always have the end seat in the front row of the orchestra, and when the prevailing

diva would respond to the plaudits of the enthusiastic audience, Seagrist would rise from his seat and go forth to the spot where his favorite diva stood, acknowledging the tumultuous applause. Then he would draw forth an enormous red or blue handkerchief, which he would wave energetically, shouting "Bravo!" bowing profusely to the star of the night. It would be the same at the matinees. Such was the ticket speculator of that day!

Then there was "Opera Charley," and he, too, was artistically inclined, being content if his earnings permitted him to mingle among the audience on all great occasions.

All of the directors of grand opera and great foreign attractions were wont to solicit large loans from the more important of the ticket speculators, and this procedure did not cease until the death of George Tyson, without whose aid few of our managers could have survived. It is but fair to his memory to state that Tyson was not always prompted solely by a desire for personal gain. It was an ordinary occurrence with him to advance from ten to twenty-five thousand dollars to Henry E. Abbey, and the large deposits in Europe, which Mapleson, Strakosch, Maretzek and Maurice Grau were compelled to make, to insure their American opera seasons, were nearly always contributed, to a great extent, by both Rullmann and Tyson. Rullmann did not die a rich man, and if the truth were known, it would be disclosed that his fortune consisted principally of the I O U's of the managers and artists whom he had befriended, some of whom are still living to-day.

These men took enormous risks at a period when such operations were vastly more dangerous than they

are now. It was Tyson's enormous advance subscription, and those of the younger Rullmann and Mr. McBride, that made the opera seasons at the Metropolitan Opera House possible until a very few years ago.

The present vogue of ticket speculation, however, is greatly to be deplored, and the condition is due solely to the public. There can be no doubt but that some of our managers are in league with these operators, and in instances even employ them; but the majority of the managers would welcome any law which would end their existence.

Such establishments as the Hippodrome and the Madison Square Garden are responsible for the multiplicity and for the low calibre of the modern street ticket agent, and our lawmakers do not seemingly make the least effort to reduce their numbers.

A high license would best solve the problem, for the utter abolition of the evil is impossible with a public that rails at an abuse even while availing itself of an advantage derived therefrom. There are thousands of New Yorkers who never go to a box office for tickets; they prefer to pay a premium and get good seats rather than stand in line for hours.

Some of these ticket speculators, even those of recent years, have become wealthy, and others have left the field to become influential in the amusement calling.

The brothers Hurtig (of the firm Hurtig & Seamon) were all ticket speculators on the streets of New York a comparatively short period ago; and Morris Gest, who married a daughter of David Belasco, and is to-day an important producer of musical plays, was a ticket speculator up to a few years ago. Mr. Alexander, who has perhaps the largest clientele of any single

hotel ticket agent, began with a little news stand in the old Coleman House at 27th Street and Broadway, and, by a persistent application to a single purpose, has built up a patronage from clubs and representative New Yorkers, which he supplies at his present ticket office in the Hotel Albany. He is wealthy, as is also Mr. McBride, who has been a hotel ticket agent for more than thirty-five years, starting humbly at the Union Square Hotel in a modest news stand; to-day he has offices in the Rector Street Arcade and other downtown buildings, as well as at the Hotel Cadillac.

James W. Miller, at the Equitable Building, was a partner of Frederick Rullmann in the 60's and is the oldest of to-day's ticket agents.

It is altogether likely that within the next few years the London method of Libraries will prevail in New York and perhaps in other large centres. The "library" system in England is unique in that no premium is charged save for extraordinary occasions, but the elements of speculation are found to be even more extensive in their operations. This method was inaugurated by a Mr. Ashton who first found a profitable field in supplying choice places for the Royal family; this gradually expanded to such an extent that the nobility, members of Parliament and various merchants found it convenient to go to Ashton for seats for operas and theatres, paying for same at the regular price at their pleasure.

This method gave to men of the Ashton type a certain influence and discretion, which was not to be ignored by the managerial faction. In due time the "Ashtons" received a commission on each ticket they bought; this resulted in a patronage which made it possible for the men in control of the libraries to pur-

chase enormous blocks of seats and boxes, paying for same in advance of production. The result of their combined operations was to eliminate as far as the manager is concerned all the risks attending the productions; in fact, it is known that in the heyday of the Gayety Theatre these gentlemen would purchase a majority of the seating capacity of that establishment for several months ahead. Other theatres were similarly affected, while the grand opera seasons at Covent Garden and Drury Lane are assured of success through this procedure before the public is invited to purchase a single seat.

The "Library" system has not aroused such indignation in England as characterizes the vogue of the street ticket speculator of this country. The public regards the matter as an accommodation, the better class rarely going to a box office for its seats. Undoubtedly the "credit" system attached to the scheme has been its most sustaining feature. It is certain that there exists an entente cordiale between all concerned, so that, in England at least, the problem is solved.

In Paris a similar method prevails; the men in charge being of responsible and reputable character, and everything being open and above reproach.

It would naturally seem plausible for such a relation to exist in America. The Tysons whose vast chain of hotel ticket offices are now operated by a corporation of which George L. Bascom is the head, really have, in a way, been operating under much the same method, save that they do not receive a commission from the theatre managers or from the opera house directors; but that we are fast evolving into something of this kind is evident enough. Sooner or later a law will be passed, which will either abolish the

sidewalk speculator, or else place the license at so forbidding a rate that profit will be possible only to a limited number, eventually eliminating all but the hotel agent. Then will come the library, already started in West 42nd Street with a downtown branch. It all depends on the willingness of the managers to pay a fee to the "librarian" for the convenience of theatre patrons.

The "library" will be able to show a certain influence in that it can choose the attractions for the patrons to whom it extends credit. The manager of modern times will not be slow to realize this, hence, in due time, perhaps within a year, the problems of seating the tremendous theatre going population in the one hundred places of amusement of this day will have been solved, and the boisterous, insulting, loud mouthed ruffian who is wont to monopolize the Long Acre district to the utter jeopardy of refined theatre goers, will be relegated to the circuses, prize fights and similar amusements where the patron will find much in common, and have less cause to resent his sway.

CHAPTER V**THE BUSINESS SIDE OF THE STAGE—GREAT FORTUNES, AND WHO MADE THEM—THE THEATRICAL “DEAD HEAD.”**

Of all the great fortunes amassed in the amusement calling, it may be truthfully stated that the majority of those acquired outside of the circus field have been accumulated in the last ten years. P. T. Barnum, James T. Bailey, the Sells Family, the Ringlings, and others operating in the white-tented arena, were millionaires long before that distinction had been reached by any of their managerial confreres in the distinctly theatrical or musical world. Now, however, conditions have changed. The stage has come into its own.

During the last decade, Abraham L. Erlanger, Marc Klaw, William Harris, Nixon and Zimmerman, Joseph Brooks, and Al. Hayman have become millionaires; great fortunes are also possessed by H. B. Harris, Lee Shubert, Samuel Harris, David Belasco, Al. H. Woods, William A. Brady, Henry W. Savage and Gus Hill—all operating in the business department of the theatre, and their accumulations are the result of comparatively recent prosperity. The majority of those named in either class have vested rights in real, personal and theatrical property to such an extent that their incomes are practically assured on an enormous basis for years to come.

Likely millionaires (and these have attained their

fortunes in the operation of theatres of the "one night stand" class) are Julius Cahn and Moses Reis, and they, too, by reason of the tremendous commissions which they receive for booking attractions in other theatres than their own, are assured annual incomes of prodigious proportions as long as their business is conducted on present lines.

Of theatrical and operatic managers who have passed away, Frank W. Sanger left about half a million of dollars, while a similar fortune was inherited by the widow and daughter of Maurice Grau, who had the distinction of being the first impresario to die in comfortable circumstances. Jacob Litt was a millionaire when he went to a premature grave, the majority of his fortune being amassed with a single play—"In Old Kentucky." J. H. McVicker was a man of great wealth, and his fortune, also, was created in a managerial career of much artistic worth. He was the father-in-law of Edwin Booth, and the magnificent McVicker's Theatre in Chicago is an imposing monument to his long and honorable activity. John W. Albaugh left a large fortune, which was principally earned in Baltimore and the South. David Bidwell, John Spaulding and John W. Norton were rich men when death brought their active careers to a close. E. G. Gilmore and Eugene Tompkins were in the millionaire class long before they died.

Oscar Hammerstein is a millionaire, and he has the distinction of being the only impresario, dead or living, to reach that glory, though it must be candidly confessed that his Music Hall at 42nd Street and Broadway and his real estate operations have contributed in a greater degree to his present possessions than his grand opera achievements. But Oscar, being

a wizard, is not to be judged by ordinary standards, and he would be a rash prophet who would attempt to foretell what his future will disclose. His recent retirement from the operatic field has added greatly to his fortune.

In vaudeville many fortunes of great dimensions have been made in the last decade. B. F. Keith is many times a millionaire, and it is said that from his moving picture interests alone he has now an income of \$250,000 a year, while his most intimate business associate, Frederick F. Proctor, who began his career as a strolling acrobat—though not assuredly a millionaire—has such valuable properties under his control, and the income from them is so large that an appraisal of his estate would disclose an enormous total.

S. Z. Poli, also of vaudeville, came here eighteen years ago from Italy. He was a sculptor in the present Eden Musee on West 23rd Street, but went to New Haven in the early 90's and opened a small musee, where a few wax figures of his own construction were shown. From time to time he added a vaudeville act or two, and these appeared from four to ten times daily. To-day this industrious Italian has sixteen palatial theatres, the majority of which he owns, and his fortune is estimated as far in excess of a million dollars.

Charles E. Kohl and his partners, George Castle and George W. Middleton, who operate western vaudeville theatres, are decidedly millionaires, while Morris Myerfeld, the president of what is known as "The Great Orpheum Circuit," about two decades ago became interested in the two theatres giving vaudeville at San Francisco and Los Angeles. To-day he is

the leading spirit in the most extensive and most profitable chain of theatres in the world, and, in conjunction with one or two associates, owns more than a dozen amusement edifices and holds long leases on as many more. He is a multi-millionaire, while his general manager, Martin Beck, who, fifteen years ago, was encountering vicissitudes in the West such as few men have survived, has, by reason of his unparalleled industry and untiring energy, become the most conspicuous and by far the most influential figure in the field of vaudeville. His career has illustrated more than any other the great opportunity which vaudeville has offered and is still offering to the rising generation of showmen.

Percy Williams, who, less than ten years ago, was managing a small variety theatre in the Eastern District of Brooklyn, is a millionaire, and has become in this short space of time a great magnate. His rise is due to a fixed policy to present, in theatres of unsurpassed beauty and construction, a superior grade of entertainment, and to him more than to any one individual or body of individuals is due the very great uplift which has obtained in what is known as modern vaudeville. Mr. Williams owns seven theatres in Greater New York and has large interests in other directions.

In the last few years a gradual foothold has been gained by a number of gentlemen as a result of the moving picture craze, and the achievements of some of these make interesting reading to-day. Less than five years ago Marcus Loew was operating a penny arcade in upper New York. To this he added a small auditorium where moving pictures were exhibited at an admission scale of five cents. To-day this man is

immensely rich. He controls no less than twenty theatres, half of which are in the Greater City, veritable gold mines.

William Gane but two years ago showed an amazing intrepidity by leasing the Manhattan Theatre, which was only available from month to month pending its destruction for mercantile use. He was enabled to remain there nearly eighteen months, and make a fortune as a result. To-day he has constructed a new and beautiful auditorium on Broadway and 31st Street, which is called also "The Manhattan Theatre," while at the Circle Theatre and a half dozen others in this vicinity he is coining money.

William Fox's achievements in this field have been on such a scale as to justify a chapter in this volume.

In Philadelphia a manufacturer of moving picture machines, S. Lubin, entered a few years ago into the exhibition side of the business, and his interests are so large at this time that there is not space to enumerate them, other than to add his name to the class of wealthy showmen.

Outside of the business department, there are many large fortunes to be noted. Joseph Murphy has long been famed as the richest actor, but this distinction is hardly true of him to-day, though he is undoubtedly a rich man. Francis Wilson's wealth is rated very high—over a million. Lotta has been a millionairess for twenty years, and her properties increase in value all the time. Maggie Mitchell (now Mrs. Abbott) was very rich when she retired from the stage. Oliver Byron is worth half a million. George Cohan has amassed an immense fortune in the last few years, and his income is overwhelmingly large. McIntyre and Heath have saved a fortune; so have the Russell

Brothers. William H. Crane, John Drew, Jeff De Angelis, Lew Fields, Maude Adams and Willie Collier are not only rich, but are at this time adding to their wealth, with no indication of any retrograde movement in their careers.

There are many instances where immense earnings by individuals have not resulted in large savings. Sarah Bernhardt, whose active career has been perhaps the most prolonged that can be recalled, and whose honorarium has been the largest of any that theatrical history records, has no fortune whatever, and her enormous income is, as a rule, used in advance of its date of maturity. It has always been necessary for the divine Sarah to call upon her impresarios for help preceding a tour, and she has invariably given as security her life insurance policy, and yet here we have a player who never earns less than \$150,000 a year. Recently an offer was made to Sarah of \$100,000 for twenty weeks in vaudeville.

Denman Thompson, whose one great success, "The Old Homestead," has drawn more money than any play in the world's history, is by no means a man of wealth, and the spectacle of this grand old man of the stage, after passing his seventy-fifth year, succumbing to the temptations of vaudeville, is not an exhilarating one. There are many instances where stars who have held long sway and whom the public have paid homage to for time immemorial, have been buried by "the actors' fund," but nothing can be gained by the recital at this time of specific cases, though they are exceedingly numerous and significant.

In the musical world—where fabulous earnings are a matter of common comment—large fortunes have been accumulated by comparatively few. Adelina

Patti, who at all periods of her unexampled career has been by far the highest paid artist in the world, is of course immensely wealthy, though aside from her Castle at "Craig-y-nos" and her unparalleled collection of valuable jewels and treasures, her personal fortune is not as large as would be expected from one who has averaged an honorarium of \$4,000 a night during one of the longest active careers that history can reveal. This is to be explained partly by the fact that the diva did not sing more than three times a week or ten times a month.

Jean De Reszke and his brother Edouard are millionaires, and large fortunes are possessed by Madam Sembrich, by Schumann-Heink (who came to the Metropolitan Opera House first at a salary of \$250 a week and is to-day able to earn in excess of \$4,000 in the same period). In fact, this sum represents a smaller total than her average income at this time. Emma Eames and Signor Caruso are possessed of snug fortunes, while one of the wealthiest singers in the world is Francesco Tamagno, whose reputation for economy has often been referred to in a spirit of ridicule in the press.

Tommaso Salvini was a millionaire when he came to America the first time in 1873; and he, too, has been credited with much closeness and even greed by his biographers.

A recital of the fortunes and earnings in the amusement calling would be incomplete if it did not embrace those who figure in the artistic department of the vaudeville. May Irwin is accounted in the millionaire class, and though a great portion of her career was spent in musical and farce comedy, it is as a

vaudevillian that she will be remembered. While in this field, where once she was accorded about \$150 a week, recently she received \$2,500 weekly for a long season for singing a few "coon" songs.

Harry Lauder has the distinction of earning the largest weekly stipend ever paid to a single vaudevillian in the history of the stage. While his salary has been but \$3,500 a week, his manager, William Morris, is called upon to pay \$5,000 in all, before he begins to reckon his other weekly expenses. This is due to the fact that Morris has had to buy off Lauder's English managers. Yet even at this extraordinary salary, Morris has proclaimed the clever Scot as the cheapest artist he has ever engaged. Lauder's period of prosperity has not been long, so that he is by no means as wealthy as Albert Chevalier, who has had a prolonged reign at a salary of \$1,750 a week. If the many stories told of Lauder's penurious qualities are true, then one may well wonder what his fortune will amount to when his career has been fully spent.

In conclusion it may be said that at no time in the world's history has the amusement calling been so lucrative or afforded so many openings as to-day. The advent of the moving picture alone has brought into being no less than 30,000 new places of entertainment, varying in size from the regulation store theatre to auditoriums with a seating capacity of 5,000.

This state of affairs has served to attract new capital to this prolific field to an amount conceded to be in excess of fifty million of dollars, much of which is now seeking investment. Thus a condition is created which may well attract the interest of able and ambitious men, for it can hardly be doubted that the rising gen-

eration of showmen will enroll a fair proportion, at least, of the capable, wealthy and influential men of the country. In no field are opportunities greater.



The theatrical "dead head" is of ancient vintage, and it is only of very recent date that any effective effort has been made to reduce his sway. The elder Grau, the first impresario of that family, was an arch enemy of this species; he was wont to observe that to establish the precedent of free seats was to educate the recipient to forget how to pay. He even declared that a "dead head" of the theatre became so chronic to the habit that he would refuse to pay carriage hire to a funeral.

Once the impresario, in a desire to avoid a particularly persistent "dead head," left word with the guardian of the portals of his sanctum, in the old French Theatre, that if Mr. S. called for him to inform the gentleman that he (the impresario) was dead. Well, Mr. S. called, and at once inquired for Mr. Grau, but was informed that the director had just passed away.—

"What, he died?" cried Mr. S., "And I can't get no more seats! Ach, what a calamity!"—

It does seem strange that the practice of issuing courtesies in our theatres has undergone no moderation in the last half century; in fact, the custom has grown with the extension of the business itself. The practice of sending seats wholesale to factories and department stores has prevailed for years innumerable, while the use of lithographs and posters in exchange for window privilege tickets has resulted in the creation of "The Cut Rate" agency, whereby a dozen

stores in various parts of the city conduct a general business in this line. It is even emphatically maintained that the most important amusement caterers in this and other cities, when they happen to house a "failure," send large allotments of seats to these agencies, receiving in return one-third or less of the box office price.

Practically all of our managers supply, through the People's Institute and similar educational channels, seats to any desired extent at half prices, the rule being suspended only when the current attraction is of an extraordinary character. The theatrical profession are invariably welcome at the theatres and even at the opera houses, though there have been a few managers, such as the late Augustin Daly and his stern father-in-law, John Duff, who frowned upon the custom; Mr. Daly exercised a certain discrimination in the matter, which lifted the barrier in special instances.

That the loose methods in vogue have led to abuses of these managerial courtesies goes without saying, and it could only be a question of time before the general tendency of the times to bring order and rectitude into the amusement calling, would result in some device which would provide a remedy for the evil. Thus in the early part of the year 1910, the Messrs. Shubert announced an utter suspension of the free list, except the public press, in all of their theatres and attractions throughout the country. The ultimatum was given the appearance of moderation, to the extent that these managers had promised to give frequent professional matinees at which the player would be welcome.

The policy inaugurated by the Messrs. Shubert is hardly likely to yield the long sought relief, nor can

it be stated that even the Shuberts themselves will be satisfied with the results. The plan lacks forethought, is wholly wanting in the method of appliance, while the remedy cannot possibly be productive. At the time of this writing there has been no following created from other managerial sources in emulation of the Shuberts' rule. The reason for this is simple enough.

The one incentive in these days when stock companies no longer prevail for the players practical education, is the opportunity, none too plentiful at that, which the young actor or actress has to observe his more celebrated confreres, when he or she is disengaged, or at such odd day matinees as are now given at one theatre or another almost every day in the week.

Of course there are players who are never engaged, and others to whom courtesies avail nothing, but these are in the great minority. The average manager is well aware that the week before Christmas and Holy Week find fifty per cent of the country's stage workers in New York, and to these the loss of their salaries for these two weeks has been greatly compensated for by the privilege, which has always been theirs, to witness the current successes at the metropolitan theatres. To deny them this, their one and only source of acquiring practical knowledge of their art, seems indeed cruel. Of course some can afford to pay, but this cannot possibly be the aim of the Messrs. Shubert.

The professional matinee as conducted in these days is a "joke." Many years ago, when players were in the hundreds, such a function had a true ring to it; the theatre selected was invariably the largest in the city,

the Academy of Music or the Metropolitan Opera House; the managers and stars (and they were never governed by commercial incentive), would donate everything, not a seat would be sold, none but professionals would be admitted, and the seats would be apportioned in a truly considerate manner. Even under these conditions the theatres were not large enough to accommodate the comparatively limited number of players in town; then again the distribution of the best seats and boxes to the best known stars was of course resented by those who assumed equal renown.

Therefore, if, under such excellent arrangements, the professional matinee did not answer (for it must be remembered that courtesies were extended during the week just the same,) what may we expect in modern times?

The average Shubert theatre has about 800 seats, the theatrical profession to-day is numbered in the tens of thousands, yet even these small theatres are not entirely or even principally given over to the tabooed actor. The result is that a few chosen celebrities, or perhaps all of the artists engaged for the Shubert attractions and theatres are considered, but even all of these are not cared for. Seats are sold to the public, at least such has been the case up to the time these pages are penned, and why not confess it? The ubiquitous press agent, wise in his generation, uses the spectacle of so many well-known players gathered together, and an effort is made to attract the general public. This is so successful that the utmost confusion prevails at the theatre; thousands of actors and actresses are turned away from the doors, unless

they choose to buy seats from speculators. More than once they have been known to buy seats at the box office for a "professional matinee."

A few weeks ago, a new burlesque theatre, the Columbia, which has had a successful inauguration and which is conducted by a body of gentlemen noted for their advanced and generous ideas, announced one of these functions. No better illustration can be had, as to how anxious the actors are to see each other than the statement that at this particular matinee 2,500 were invited. The theatre has never housed so brilliant an audience, before or after, as that which vainly endeavored to enter the auditorium; yet, despite the fact that these possessed duly accredited invitations, the box office was wide open, the speculators were reaping a harvest, and ninety per cent of the guest were turned from the doors, humiliated, insulted and fatigued.

Verily the Messrs. Shubert, with all due respect to their efforts to create progressive innovations, have missed their mark in this instance. Will they admit this fact and find a new way to remedy the evils they wish to check? We shall see!

What the actors need is increased opportunities for observing the offerings of their fellow-artists, and it is amazing that this fact is not realized by a management which has all to gain by providing them with every possible means of artistic advancement.

CHAPTER VI

THE VAUDEVILLE BOOKING AGENT—THE UNITED BOOKING OFFICES—PIONEER WORK IN NEW ROCHELLE—THE DEVELOPMENT OF BURLESQUE.

That the vaudeville booking agent should reach the dignity of forming the basis of an important chapter in a volume of theatrical records, is best justified when the writer proclaims that the position held to-day by such powerful magnates in vaudeville, as B. F. Keith, Martin Beck, C. E. Kohl and William Morris has been accomplished by their achievements as booking agents, rather than through their enormous vested interests in theatres and theatrical property.

It is true that Mr. Keith was the owner and manager of four palatial theatres devoted to "continuous" vaudeville, when, in the year 1900, he sought to amalgamate the managerial interests of this country, solely for booking purposes. Before the meeting of the managers in Boston in that year, they did not even know each other! Mr. Keith's general manager, E. F. Albee, had heard from a man named John Murdock that, in the West, the managers had been booking their own attractions and had conserved a fortune in the commissions which, in the East, had gone to a few agents. These agents at that time were George Liman (in whose office William Morris began as clerk), James J. Armstrong, Jo Paige Smith, Clinton

Wilson and the writer. The last three had attracted considerable notice from the managers by reason of their earnings, and the astute Mr. Albee, (who invented "the Indian sign"), began to sit up and take notice. However this volume is not to recite ancient history, save where it is necessary to provide the reader with a proper point of view, and for a concrete comprehension of modern records.

The managers got together and at the outset undoubtedly did endeavor to cause the extinction of the legitimate (the word is used advisedly) agent. But they made many serious errors in those days and also paid a very heavy penalty before they finally survived to become monarchs indeed of the most lucrative amusement field in the world's history.

As a manager, Mr. Keith controls one theatre of the first class in New York City (all of his other theatres as well as all of Mr. Proctor's are devoted to small vaudeville acts and moving pictures), but as a booking agent Mr. Keith is the absolute, indisputable Czar of vaudeville. No matter who else may figure prominently in the United Booking Offices, Keith alone rules and profits the most.

The booking agent who created his own sway by finding a market for the services of his clients up to the year 1900, was accustomed to receive five per cent of an artist's salary; even a decade ago it was possible for four or five industrious men to earn incomes of about \$20,000 a year. Now all this has changed! The United Booking Offices receive five per cent, and the independent agent who is in their good graces is permitted to book attractions with this association, with the understanding that of the extra five per cent, which he is forced to tax his client, he

must give one-half to the United Booking Offices, which means, that the artist, if he only pays ten per cent of his salary for the privilege of having an agent who is not exiled by the powers of the Long Acre Building, has the satisfaction of knowing that seven and one-half per cent of the salary he receives goes back to the managers who have given him employment, while to the agent himself who has all the labor, all of the expense, goes two and one-half per cent! Perhaps, after all, the reader will appreciate the need of a chapter devoted to this species in this volume.

It is conservatively estimated that \$50,000 weekly is deducted from the salaries of vaudeville artists; of this total the greatest portion goes back to the managers themselves, but there is enough left to make the field a prolific one for more than 200 individual agents. But the number who have been able to get "in right," or who have had the strength and business acumen to rise above the conditions that surround them, are few indeed.

Most of the favored—or shall I say the prosperous agents? are quartered in the same building with the United Booking Offices. The policy of most of these is to secure the exclusive control of "hits."

Perhaps the most successful of the number is P. J. Casey, a man of large physique and of very "large" personality, which is meant to convey to the lay reader that Mr. Casey prospers because of his winning ways. He has a very large face, and when a smile illuminates it, one feels that it comes from the heart. Mr. Casey does not drink or smoke, but he has a splendid appetite, and there are two things he can do to perfection, laugh and—swear! However, his earnings, even under the conditions stated, are not less

than \$40,000 a year. His offices are not much less in size or importance than those of the managerial combine, and he is undoubtedly satisfied with his affiliations.

M. S. Bentham has been closely associated with the powerful interests in vaudeville almost from their organization. He demonstrated an ability to please manager and artist, and at one time constituted a sort of agent's trust in himself. He has, however, maintained a very strong clientele at all periods; he lives in his own house, has a yacht and an automobile and belongs to many clubs. He has the knack of getting the attraction he goes after. His earnings are not much less than the President's of the United States.

Edward S. Keller, also of the Long Acre Building contingent, began like William Morris as an office boy for George Liman, and when Liman died, and Morris started in for himself, Keller was his principal member of staff. His salary grew from \$10.00 a week to \$75.00 in a very few years. Finally Keller, having reached his majority, went into partnership with Barney A. Myers of whom I shall speak later, and the two became prominent. A separation due to trouble between the senior partner and the "big office" resulted in Keller's going it alone, and he is one of the most successful agents of to-day.

Albert Sutherland was an established theatrical business man long before the present era of vaudeville, and he had London offices in the 90's with American representation. Mr. Sutherland has large vested interests as a producer and he also has important attractions on tour, playing in the legitimate theatres. He has always been in high favor with the leading officers of the United Booking Company, and his earnings are

large enough,—well, they can be computed in five figures each year, that's certain!

Jo Paige Smith is the "Mephistopheles" of agents, so named by the writer, because of the machinations which he has had to resort to at various periods in his long and somewhat stormy career, in order to maintain his ground. Mr. Smith was an actor, and long before the vaudeville managers knew each other, he had an office in the Knickerbocker Building, where he was the New York representative of Harry Davis, of Pittsburg; but no matter where he was, or what he would be doing, he was a predominating factor. Here we have a man who has had more to do with vaudeville matters and has given his brains for the profit of every one but himself to a greater extent than any one I can now recall. Nevertheless, Mr. Smith keeps from utter want, and often when he has seemed to be outgeneralled, he would turn up in his "Mephisto" style as the partner of some one who would not contribute to his extinction. Recently he was affiliated with a son of E. F. Albee, and the announcement of the partnership created a sensation in vaudeville circles at the time.

As these pages are being written, the firm of Smith and Albee has dissolved, and the restlessness of the former gentleman will be relieved undoubtedly by another coalition or shift while this volume is in press.

C. E. Bray, who is in charge of the Chicago office of the combined interests in vaudeville, has come to his present state through sheer experience. He was regarded as one of the best railroad men in this country a quarter of a century ago and he was identified with the Northern Pacific Railway in San Francisco. The larger the scope for his endeavor, the greater the re-

sponse from him would be. Mr. Bray in due time attracted the attention of the alert and wise general manager of the Orpheum Circuit. He was first placed in charge of the New Orleans Orpheum and there became so prominent, that Mr. Beck sought an outlet of greater proportions for his undoubted ability.

Mr. Bray is of commanding appearance, and is one of the few exponents of the old school of theatrical business men who have bowed to and also adopted the methods, which modernism and progress have demanded. He has been with the Orpheum Company even longer than Mr. Beck.

The Marinelli Agency is perhaps the largest and most important booking concern in the world, with offices in all the European centres. The growth of this vast institution in recent years has been really remarkable. Mr. Marinelli was an acrobat, and when he started out to represent managers and artists he little dreamed that he was destined to treat with the world's greatest celebrities. He observed that in this country many of the best known players had been tempted by the increased honorarium which obtains in vaudeville, and he became similarly active in Europe. Lily Langtry was one of his first captures. Now-a-days no comment is excited by the announcements of the contracts affected with stars of the very first magnitude. Sarah Bernhardt, Madame Rejane and Jane Hading have appeared in London Music Halls, and their appearance in this country will undoubtedly follow in due time. The New York representative of the Marinelli interests is Charles Bornhaupt, a young Russian who came to this country as the secretary to Emanuel Warner, and afterwards became a factor in the representation of the Somers

and Warner Agency of London. Later he started independently for himself, and he brought to his aid such requisites as are possessed by few, indeed, of our agents. Mr. Bornhaupt is still a very young man, who speaks and writes all the European languages, a qualification that has availed him greatly in the conduct of so voluminous and polyglotous a business.

Joe Wood is responsible for the existence of thousands of theatres of a class that were either non-existent three years ago, or else have been transformed. A better explanation would be conveyed by stating that he was the pioneer of what is known to fame and in theatrical parlance as "the small time." Five years ago he was a producer of "Girl" and novelty acts. Being a man of letters and much versatility, he evolved a number of potent attractions for the vaudeville theatres; he wrote the librettos and scores of his productions, staged them himself, and in due time had a desire to add the booking of these to his activities. His energy knew no bounds. Finally he opened an office in the Sheridan Building, and for a time, being fearful that his operations would be discovered by the larger interests, conducted his business almost secretly; but in less than a year his expansion reached enormous proportions.

In an ill advised moment, flushed with prosperity, and after he had become the exclusive representative of over two hundred theatres, he hied himself to offices in the Long Acre Building, and soon became a victim of "the Indian Sign," which means that the mighty potentates who hold sway on the fifth floor of that structure, had concluded that Wood's vogue had gone beyond the limits which they considered permissible. So, after he had practically created an outlet for two

thousand vaudeville acts, and had brought to the surface scores of worthy ones, which later became headliners on the "Big Time" circuit, Wood was relegated, over night, as it were, to that oblivion, which more than one of his predecessors were cast into, and from which none have ever been rescued. But Wood was of that type of modern achievers who know not when they are hurt, and after a short spell of inactivity he resumed in new offices, as far away from the Long Acre Building as discretion and wisdom would permit.

The first week in his new quarters found the young agent with just two acts and not a single theatre as assets, but within a month he had recovered more than half of his lost clientele and had created new allies to such an extent that his position is gradually reaching a point where he will be a greater power than he was when "dethroned."

Richard Pitrot, known as the globe trotting agent, abandoned his career as an impersonator years ago, because of the international prestige, which has come to him by reason of his discernment in placing acts of vaudeville. Pitrot has been independent in his policy at all times; his word is accepted by managers and artists all over the world. At this time he is the accredited European representative of the Alexander Pantages Circuit, a growing concern that has come forward in the last two years with rapid strides. Its New York representative is Louis Pincus who began as an office boy with William Morris, and, like so many others who aided this appreciative employer, has risen to prominence. Few men connected with the vaudeville world are possessed of more intrinsic knowledge as to values than this youthful, though energetic worker. He is a veritable encyclopedia on

the question of salaries, and is often consulted by men high up in the ranks of the business itself.

The Shea Brothers came from Springfield, where the eldest still holds forth and is the head of a prosperous chain of theatres. P. F. Shea and his methods are responsible for the vogue of a dozen men now holding a conspicuous position in the booking field. Martin Shea is a member of the firm Feiber, Shea and Coutant who control many theatres, and were early pioneers in the popular priced policy, now so predominant. Joseph Shea has offices in the Gayety Theatre, and his interests are manifold; he has been particularly alert in the discovery of worthy talent before it became known to the important interests. He has also been careful to protect himself against "the Indian Sign," which is wont to be displayed on the fifth floor of the Long Acre Building, as soon as any prolific endeavor becomes more conspicuous or more successful than was desired by the mighty potentates who hold forth there.

Barney A. Myers has been in the business department of theatricals for fully a quarter of a century. He has been manager, agent, treasurer and what not? In 1904, when the writer left a large agency clientele, to conduct the farewell tour of Adelina Patti, he selected Mr. Myers as a likely and capable representative to look after his interests during the progress of the tour, intending, at its conclusion, to resume personal control.

Myers undoubtedly knows a good thing when he sees it; he remained in charge long enough to accumulate experience at least. In due time he ceased to act for the writer, displayed his own name, sought other quarters and became himself a prominent figure as a

booking agent, being regarded with great favor by the Association of Vaudeville Managers, then located in the St. James Building.

After the Patti Tour had ended, the unlucky scribe returned to his offices to find not one client left him. To this day he has never ascertained the why or wherefore of Myers' procedure. A few years ago Myers became involved in a difficulty with one of the officers of the United Booking Concern and has ceased to do business with that institution, but he at once became a powerful ally of the Independents. Rising with them, Myers books the majority of the American acts, placed with William Morris. His earnings are fabulous; he is also a man of unquestionable ability, a tremendous worker and a veritable litigant. Other gentlemen in the booking field who have prospered are Norman Jeffries who has made Philadelphia the scene of his operations, and James Plunkett, who began as an office boy in Hurtig and Seamon's offices and has risen to prominence. A new firm composed of Reed Albee, Frank W. Evans and Harry F. Weber started up in July, 1910, arousing much interest in the vaudeville world, because of the fact that one of the members is the son of the central figure in the United Booking Offices.



The United Booking Offices, being a perpetuation of the first association of vaudeville managers, have for their officers men who have served long and efficiently. The equipment of these offices may be said to be well nigh perfect, a condition due greatly to the fact that the responsible positions are held by men

who have been with Mr. Keith ever since he himself became a factor in vaudeville matters.

Samuel K. Hodgdon, since the early 90's, has been Mr. Keith's general booking agent; originally he had charge of the first Keith House in Boston and was wont to come to New York once a week to book the acts for that establishment. He had been a showman since early manhood and possessed of qualities which have endeared him to all with whom he has come in contact, being a man of dignified bearing. Hodgdon is a prodigious worker. He made it a study to ascertain the wants of the Keith audiences and he was uncompromising, when it came to the selection of the numbers, which composed the vast array of programmes he had sole charge of. For a long period he alone selected every act that would appear on a stage of any theatre for which Mr. Keith had the booking franchise. It would be well, if he might yet have this responsibility, for his methods, by which he conciliated many widely conflicting interests, were beyond all criticism, while his loyalty to Mr. Keith was absolutely inviolable. Hodgdon is one man, holding a position wherein he would be subject to the criticism of those whom he was forced to disappoint, who, nevertheless, commanded their respect always. At all times he has been the most highly regarded of the potential figures in the big booking office.

Philip F. Nash, like Mr. Hodgdon, has been with Mr. Keith nearly twenty years, but, unlike the latter, his service has not been consecutive, for he went over to the Proctor forces shortly after Mr. J. Austin Fynes took charge of the latter's large interests. Nash was a newspaper man like so many others who have found prosperity in theatricals.

He had charge of the Philadelphia Keith house from its first inauguration. When he joined Mr. Proctor he went to Albany where he wedded the charming Miss Mack. He rejoined Mr. Keith after the troublous period, known as the White Rat strike, and has ever since been a factor in the vast booking system. Phil Nash has the quality of being able to comfort a struggling Thespian. Far be it from him to discourage an applicant for "time!" "I will take care of you." "Leave it to me, old man!" "We are just coming to you now!" "I am working on your time right now!" are favorite expressions of this optimist.



The Independent Booking Agency has ceased to exist as such, and this status has long threatened. The principal officers were Edward Mozart, M. R. Sheedy and J. J. Quigley. There have been constant dissensions in this company from the outset. Mr. Mozart was the first manager to inaugurate a progressive policy in cities of this class, and long before the present era of "Pop" vaudeville he brought to his patrons stars from the legitimate stage, presenting programmes quite as attractive as those seen in metropolitan cities; in fact, it may be stated that he was the pioneer in this field. Mr. Mozart is ably assisted in the various cities where his interests are greatest.

In Williamsport, Pa., Fred M. Lamade has presided not only over the Family Theatre in that city, but over a group of successful houses, all governed by the Mozart policy. As evidence of the stability of the methods in vogue, these managers have been able to resist the "opposition," which the epidemic of moving-picture resorts brought to their doors. It is

the same at Elmira, N. Y., where George W. Middleton is in charge of Mr. Mozart's newest establishment. Here a senseless competition has been waged for years, but the really remarkable array of attractions which the Mozart faction have presented there, has caused Elmira to be regarded on a plane with cities of the first grade from a vaudeville view point.

M. R. Sheedy is an old warrior from away back. He began in Boston, Fall River and New Bedford, decades ago, and made his presence felt all over New England. One of his earliest undertakings was the magnificent Freebody Park in Newport, R. I., where he has catered to the ultra swell set of that locale. Mr. Sheedy has also provided many entertainments in the homes of such famous hosts as Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jr., and some of these have been on a scale of unparalleled grandeur. It is recalled that once, when the lady desired to secure a production, then running in one of the New York theatres, she commissioned Mr. Sheedy to obtain the attraction at any cost. In order to do so, the latter paid the management the amount which the Knickerbocker Theatre would hold for a single performance, and that theatre was closed for the night in question, so that "the Wild Rose" could be seen by Newport's fashionable set.

Mr. Quigley was formerly a specialty performer; he embraced an opportunity to establish a circuit of vaudeville theatres in New England and Nova Scotia. He has his offices in the Tremont Theatre Building in Boston, and comes to the metropolis once a week, to confer with his associates and select his attractions.

Frank Keeney became a factor in vaudeville through actual achievement. He, in some way or other, was forced to take a lease of what was the Criterion

Theatre in Brooklyn; the house had a record of failures so long, that once it was suggested that it be called the "Jonah" theatre, a title which, for a time, was held by the little Auditorium next to the Fifth Avenue Theatre in New York City. But Mr. Keeney had serious plans and he lived to see Keeney's Theatre in the city of churches a prosperous enterprise.

One of Mr. Keeney's first ventures was when he conceived the idea of bringing about a theatrical combination between May Yohe and her ertswhile husband, Captain Strong. The idea undoubtedly was that the latter would prove so absurd in his new sphere, as to create a potency from this fact alone, but Strong was by no means a bad actor; he was good enough to spoil the scheme! Keeney did not prosper with it, but he made a lot of money in the popular priced field of vaudeville.



In 1901, and for three years thereafter, the writer who had at this period his residence in New Rochelle, N. Y., effected arrangements with the Knights of Columbus, who had erected a beautiful theatre in the suburban city, by which on one night a week, from seven to ten, unknown artists (or at least their offerings were new or unknown to the important vaudeville interests), were given their first opportunity to embrace vaudeville. Here many, now famous and prosperous, were "tried out" and their careers to a great extent, as far as the vaudevilles are concerned, dated from their debut at this house. Augusta Glose has never known an idle week except from choice since she invited the managers over to New Rochelle on the night she appeared, and on the same bill were

Sydney Deane & Co., John Birch, "The man with the hats," Willa Holt Wakefield and Mabelle Adams—all of whom found instant recognition, and are to-day among the standard acts of vaudeville. Olive May and John W. Albaugh started here, as did Henry Clay Barnabee and Edna Wallace Hopper. Fancy a programme of "try outs" in a town like New Rochelle which included, in one night's performance, Barnabee, May Robson and Company, Odette Tyler, May Vokes, John Mason, Elita Proctor Otis, and others. The fact is worth mentioning as illustrative of the pioneer work which was accomplished at this period, with no other incentive than to create a better class of material for the theatres then as now controlled by the Keith "Syndicate." It is recalled that a persistent visitor to these entertainments at New Rochelle was Robert D. Girard, then the booking representative of the Orpheum Circuit. He would reach the theatre at the proper moment and leave after the very last of the acts were presented. He it was who spread the tidings of the results achieved, and it is to his credit that the many artists who went to great pains and expense to prepare their offerings were passed upon at all. Girard even sent out reports to the other managers.

In 1904 these laudable efforts were transferred to Bay Shore, L. I., and the inducement of free transportation and first-class hotel accommodations were effective in enticing several of the managers themselves. Frank Jones then as now Percy Williams' representative, never missed one of these Long Island jaunts, and he brought Mrs. Jones along; in fact, it is quite certain that the honeymoon of this devoted pair was passed in this manner.

The box office receipts were generally nil, no attempt to make a profit was even thought of. Yet, despite all this, in nine cases out of ten, when the managers did book the artists thus presented for their consideration, it was over the head of the man who had made the plan possible.



The development of burlesque, of the type now prevailing at The New Columbia Theatre, has not been accomplished easily; and a vast amount of credit is due to the gentlemen who have systematized and elevated this class of amusement to its present proportions.

Burlesque, a generation ago, was best illustrated by the organization known as The Rentz-Stantley Company, and under this title Michael B. Leavitt and his brother Abraham have for nearly forty years, without interruption, prospered. The company was first known as Madame Rentz's Female Minstrels, but this title was abandoned after a very few years.

Samuel T. Jack who created the famous Pennsylvania Oil Circuit, now survived by Moses Reis, was also a pioneer in the burlesque field, and his most conspicuous organization was known as The Lily Clay Company. Mr. Jack made a fortune in the field of burlesque, but he had no part in its elevation, nor in the raising of its standard, either from a commercial or artistic standpoint.

It was when what is known as the "Wheel" was formed, that burlesque history began to rewrite itself. There are two of these "Wheels," the one and original being known as the Columbia Amusement Company, while the other glories in the title of "Empire Cir-

cuit;" but whatever the title, these two organizations have created and developed a system for improving the condition of burlesque that is well worthy of recital. They have also shown a fine spirit among themselves, and the manner of their organization, as well as the methods by which they conduct their unique enterprises, might well serve as an incentive for more pretentious magnates in the amusement world!

These men work for each other. The prime movers in the Columbia Amusement Company are Samuel Scribner, Gus Hill, Jules Hurtig, and J. Herbert Mack, while the factors in the Empire Circuit are James J. Butler, James Fennessy and the Miner family.

Messrs. Sullivan and Krauss, however, have been with each of the two chains, and at the time these lines are written, are divorced from both.

Some of these burlesque companies, as they are gradually brought to Broadway in the new Columbia Theatre, will provide much interesting food for reflection, for some of our famous producers of musical comedy and the organizations controlled by Fred Irwin, Hurtig and Seamon, Samuel Scribner, Jack Singer and others, have already found great favor on the White Way.

The protection which the "Wheel" system affords to its component members, is demonstrated by the high grade of commercial standing possessed by the individual managers. A failure is rarely recorded for the reason that help would be forthcoming instanter to any worthy endeavorer when in temporary financial distress; surely the fine spirit, existing between the members of these bodies, has furthered their ambitions to evolve a higher state for burlesque itself.

The transformation in the last few years has been

most remarkable. It is not uncommon for as high as \$25,000 to be expended on a production for one of these organizations, nor is it any more unusual for gross receipts of \$7,000 a week to be recorded in the larger burlesque theatres, where the audiences are each year becoming more refined and gradually affording less distinction, as compared with the so-called legitimate theatres.

It is the vigorous effort of the prime factors in the burlesque field, which has brought about this state of affairs. James J. Butler of St. Louis is never happier than when he travels 1200 miles to attend a meeting of his confreres, which has for its purpose some expansion, or some plan for elevating the standard of this once despised field.

The heirs of the late H. C. Miner have been tremendous uplifters; in fact, their policy has always been to bring Broadway methods to bear in the organizing and staging of their various road burlesque ventures.

J. Lawrence Weber and Edward Rush have sustained, for fifteen years, a gradually improving standard, one of their earliest efforts, "The Parisian Widows," has been maintained to this day, each year reaching a higher pinnacle of fame, as well as adding to its box office records.

The Rentz-Santley Company is of course the pioneer of all of the existing burlesque exhibits, its reign exceeding forty years, yet by overwhelming expenditure and the up to date method of exploitation of Abraham Leavitt, (a brother of that pioneer of pioneers, M. B. Leavitt), this company has remained supreme as the years have passed. Mr. Leavitt's productions are

evolved and staged by men who figure extensively in metropolitan efforts.

"The Behman Show," is the title of one of these burlesque companies, and the performance which Mr. Singer has evolved, is certainly worthy of a more dignified name. Not since "Wine, Woman and Song" created a furore and sustained a year's run at the Circle and other theatres, has any cleverer organization been seen here. This company will be heard from in due time and soon will be accorded the best class of bookings. The same remarks would well apply for Messrs. Gordon and North's organization, presenting "The Merry Whirl."

An encouraging sign of the times is the tendency on the part of the burlesque managers who, not so long ago, were wont to present an inferior and even vulgar type of performance, to secure for their vehicles old time Casino and Broadway successes. All of Edward E. Rice's productions are about to find their way into these theatres where once the "Parisian Can Can" and "Living Pictures" were the main reliance of the men who controlled their destiny.

CHAPTER VII

ADVENT OF THE MOVING PICTURE AT KEITH'S UNION SQUARE THEATRE—THE REMARKABLE SUCCESS ACHIEVED BY A NEW ELEMENT AMONG SHOWMEN—KEITH AND PROCTOR'S SHREWDNESS IN TURNING THE MAJORITY OF THEIR THEATRES OVER TO THE CAMERA MAN—"THE FOTOPHONE"—THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE "TALKING PICTURE"—THOMAS A. EDISON'S PROPHECY—GEORGE KLEINE'S BELIEF AS TO WHAT IS IN STORE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION—THE GAUMONT EXPERIMENTS—THE RISE OF WILLIAM FOX—"THE ILLUSTRATED SONG" AND ITS SURVIVAL TO THIS DAY—THE MUSIC PUBLISHER—THE FIRM OF WILMER AND VINCENT—THE SULLIVAN AND CONSIDINE CIRCUIT.

It was during the season of 1893-94, at Keith's Union Square Theatre, that the vogue for motion photography was inaugurated. B. F. Keith, pioneer of many great achievements and originator of the "continuous" type of vaudeville, was the tour de force through which the American public had revealed to them Lumiere's cinematograph, and it was with this potent attraction that the real boom in vaudeville began. 'Tis true that the theatres under Mr. Keith's directorate had already become distinctly popular with the class known as shoppers, and the general public had begun to sit up and take notice, because of the presentation of a more refined exhibit of vaudeville than had heretofore prevailed. But it unquestionably was the Lumiere

invasion of East 14th Street that started the sway of the camera man, which finds in this nineteen hundred and tenth year of our Lord the most extraordinary revolution recorded since entertaining the public was a line of endeavor. The vogue of the cinematograph, however sensational it was at the outset, was gradual rather than instantaneous. The Union Square Theatre, which had been playing to average receipts of about \$3,500 weekly, immediately began to increase its box-office records, until, within a month from the date of its "debut," the gross takings had reached \$7,000 for each six days. (Sunday performances at this time were pompously tabooed by the "continuous" magnate.) Mr. Keith had three other theatres, in Boston, Providence and Philadelphia, respectively, where results were achieved simultaneously, quite equaling the New York records. The prevailing idea at that period was to the effect that the Keith profits during the first year of the cinematograph installation were upon an average basis of \$10,000 a week.

There were not over fifteen high-class vaudeville theatres in the early 90's, but in all of these the cinematograph was quickly made the distinguishing feature of the programmes; thus began what afterward resulted in the vaudeville craze. The theatres multiplied; managers from every part of the country abandoned their other ventures and stampeded the vaudeville arena, until no city with a population of 50,000 or more was without at least one establishment where refined vaudeville was the attraction, and the cinematograph the feature.

As an illustration of the primitive period of which I write, it need only be stated that such famous caterers as Percy Williams and Oscar Hammerstein had not

yet become factors. Outside of the Keith house, there were two other theatres in New York devoted to variety, the Proctor House on 23d Street and Tony Pastor's little band-box of a hall on East 14th Street.

After the cinematograph came the biograph, invented by Mr. Hermann Casler, of Canastota, N. Y., and this device at once created a veritable furore.

Despite the great financial results which came from the addition of motion pictures in vaudeville programmes, it was possible to secure local rights at a seemingly ridiculous figure; in fact, \$50 a week was about the average cost to a manager in those days when the machines were not sold outright.

During the first three years of the "craze" there were not wanting many signs indicating that the vogue would be limited, and, occasionally, a manager would withdraw the pictures from his programmes. But this was a rare and decidedly temporary procedure, and eventually manufacturers of stereopticons, calcium lights and magic lanterns, entered the field. In due time were presented "actualities," such as military parades, prize fights, train robberies, yacht races, and the competition for subjects became so strong that millions of dollars of invested capital, in England and France, promoted the organization of vast corporations such as the Pathe Freres, while here in America Thomas A. Edison, in whose brain motion photography originated, became a leading spirit in the progress.

After the biograph came the vitagraph and kinetograph, and by the time these additions came into being, no well-regulated theatre of varieties was without its own specially named device. If a manager's name was Jones, he would call his machine the "Joneso-

graph." If a theatre was known as the Empire, then it would be the "Empireoscope."

In the year 1900, when the vaudeville managers of this country decided to become acquainted with each other, and formed what is now called "The Vaudeville Trust," moving pictures were pursuing the even tenor of their way; progress was more in quantity than in quality. Still, no programme was without its "pictures," but as an illustration that the present phenomenal vogue was not in order, I have only to record that in many theatres where the "continuous" form of vaudeville was prevailing, the pictures were used as a "chaser," which means that when the theatre was crowded and another audience was awaiting in the lobbies an opportunity to enter, an exodus was always accomplished by throwing on the screen pictures that had already been seen by the seated audience, and on holidays this practice was taken advantage of most effectively and most unfairly.

It happened that in this year 1900 the vaudeville managers who had amalgamated, had aroused the ire of an association of vaudeville actors known as "The White Rats," which resulted in what became famous in that year as "The White Rats' Strike." At a given moment, almost by the press of a button, every "Rat" walked out of the theatres controlled by the "trust" managers. The procedure had been sudden and decidedly effective, and found the magnates of vaudeville thoroughly unprepared. It was in this instance that the efficacy of the motion picture was vividly demonstrated, and those theatres which were not compelled to close resorted to the camera man with a vengeance.

About this time, and as a result of the sustained vogue of the various devices for the presentation of

motion photography, there came into being, first in New York City, the "five-cent store theatre." These made their appearance simultaneously in East 14th Street and throughout 125th Street. The first name given to this class of auditorium was the "nicolet," and the pioneer in this particular field was J. Austin Fynes, to whom I had occasion in my first volume to pay a similar tribute for his part in vaudeville progress.

One of the very first in this field was Marcus Loew, to-day a magnate of popular priced vaudeville, with eighteen theatres in Greater New York alone, all playing to capacity at all times. This man Loew started in the early years of the twentieth century. He had opened a penny arcade in Harlem, and followed this move by combining an auditorium for the presentation of moving pictures. Since then his career has been so meteoric that the writer is inclined to the belief that within five years Mr. Loew will figure in the amusement world in a far more important and impressive way than at present. He is not without ambition and all of his operations have shown a certain desire to go higher and higher. It was this gentleman who organized the People's Amusement Company, a few years ago, and this corporation made a practice of transforming magnificent theatres heretofore devoted to the best class of attractions, into what is known now as "Pop" vaudeville establishments. Some of the theatres which they secured and which have been veritable gold mines, are the Columbia and Bijou in Brooklyn, the Majestic, Grand, Lincoln Square and Yorkville Theatres, while no week goes by that announcement is not made of an addition to the list. It is likely that before this volume reaches

its readers a chain of at least forty theatres will be controlled by Mr. Loew and his associates.

The first to give an entire evening's performance with a moving picture machine was Archie L. Sheppard, and in the year 1904 he had so many "companies" on tour that it became the habit of nearly all of the theatres in the East, when an attraction failed for its managers to resort to Mr. Sheppard and his moving picture shows. It was through Mr. Sheppard's extraordinary activity in this respect that the present remarkable era of this type of entertainment is due. Mr. Sheppard also was the first to devote a theatre of the highest class to a five-and-ten-cent scale of prices. He secured the Manhattan Theatre, which was about to be demolished to make way for the Gimbel stores. His tenancy was from month to month, but he remained there about a year, and was succeeded by William J. Gane, who, like Mr. Loew, has become an important factor in this line of effort. He made a fortune at the Manhattan, after Sheppard retired, and when that house finally did pass over to the architects, he built a new and beautiful theatre, also called the Manhattan, at the corner of 31st and Broadway, where immense profits are weekly recorded. Mr. Gane also received a long lease of the Circle Theatre, and he has at least a dozen other large auditoriums. Like Mr. Loew, he is making his impress felt all over the country, so that his future operations may be expected to place him as one of the country's greatest amusement caterers, always assuming that these managers must, from sheer necessity, improve the character of their enterprises by reason of the enormous patronage extended to them.

Another operator in this field, who has had an astonishing measure of success, is William Fox, whose two principal theatres are the Dewey Theatre on East 14th Street, and the Gotham Theatre on 125th Street. It is said that the rental of these two houses combined does not fall far short of \$100,000 a year, yet the amazing statement is made that the annual profits derived from their maintenance at a 5-cent and 10-cent scale of prices, are still larger than this sum. Of Mr. Fox the reader will learn more in another chapter.

Walter Rosenberg, a son of Henry Rosenberg, and of whom in the first volume the writer had occasion to prophesy, would be a "comer," has since the issue of that work, more than justified this prediction. He has a chain of theatres in nearby cities, and, within the past year, secured the New York Theatre Roof Garden and the Savoy Theatre on West 34th Street. Success has marked every one of his efforts to such an extent that he is likely to become prominent in the future as the projector of a superior class of theatres devoted to a combination of vaudeville and moving pictures.

There can be no more vivid illustration as to the enormous profits to be made in the field of low-priced vaudeville, than to observe the policy of Messrs. Keith and Proctor. In New York City this firm owns or controls six theatres; of these only one (the Fifth Avenue) is devoted to the type of vaudeville which these managers are supposed to stand for. All the rest are managed all the year around as moving picture houses. Even the beautiful Harlem Opera House, the first of Oscar Hammerstein's theatres, is and has been for several years a five-and-ten-cent theatre. It is nothing short of amazing to watch the progress of

this class of entertainment, which progress is so rapid that to endeavor to recite a year's achievement, one must prepare to figure on a complete change of the theatrical map.

There are more first-class theatres in New York, devoted to cheap priced vaudeville and moving pictures than there are vaudeville theatres of all other class combined, and, in addition, there are over 600 smaller theatres of the type known as store theatres. These last are gradually becoming either larger or eliminated, and the tendency is now toward theatres of enormous size, where a superior grade of performance can be given at the same low prices which now prevail.

The writer prophesies that within a few years, it will be possible to see stars as prominent as Harry Lauder, Gertrude Hoffmann and Vesta Victoria are to-day, appearing in theatres of prodigious size, at prices of admission ranging from 5 to 25 cents.

The vaudeville magnates who spend their winters at Palm Beach and similar resorts, rest content there in the knowledge that their low-priced theatres will remain.

It is not meant here to convey any impression as to the extinction of the high-priced theatres; as a matter of fact, these will acquire a far higher standard, and the only method by which their problem will be solved, will be by the presentation of the world's greatest stars, and at a scale of prices at least as high as those which now prevail at the legitimate Broadway theatres.

Mr. F. F. Proctor, besides conducting the vast chain of theatres in conjunction with Mr. Keith, has entered the smaller cities, and the results which have been

achieved by him in these are almost unbelievable. In the little town where I have the honor to reside (Mount Vernon, N. Y.), up to three years ago, it was not possible to maintain a theatre upon any basis whatever. Mr. Walter Rosenberg, two years ago, secured the one auditorium there, and after making alterations tried various policies, without the slightest indication of success. He finally sublet to Mr. Proctor, who promptly installed there his "Bijou Dream" policy, the same now in vogue at the Union Square, and the other Keith and Proctor houses in New York. It is no exaggeration to state that at least fifty per cent of the population of Mount Vernon enters this establishment at least once a week; an empty seat is unknown, while it is by no means uncommon, on ordinary days, to see a thousand persons, waiting in the lobbies and on the sidewalk for an opportunity to enter.

In this same town still another theatre has been opened, and although this house is also packed to capacity, three times a day, there has been no decrease whatever at the Proctor Theatre. This recital of conditions at Mount Vernon would answer for a thousand other cities of similar size, and the outcome has been to attract millions of dollars of capital for investment in this lucrative field.

Mr. Proctor's son, F. F. Proctor, Jr., is interested, extensively so, in this line of endeavor, and his operations are gradually increasing, with the indication that he will become a potent power in the amusement world in the next few years.

Several capitalists whose names are rarely in print in connection with moving pictures, are extensive providers in that field; among these are Mr. Felix

Isman, who has undoubtedly amassed a vast fortune from these operations alone, Mr. Joseph L. Rhinock, who is an important factor in the Shubert Enterprises in conjunction with the Honorable George B. Cox, of Cincinnati, who has also invested extensively. The latter is interested in the Marcus Loew enterprises, as is also Mr. Shubert himself.

The usual cry of "It won't last," is of course prevalent, but as the progress made in the last two years has been greater than in the entire decade that went before, one must assume that, vast as have been the strides, there is every reason to believe that the future will see still greater achievement, and this, too, from every point of view.

With the gradual elimination of the "store theatre" will come the solving of another problem, for the cry of too many theatres is even now heard everywhere. But we must consider that in Greater New York alone no less than twenty modern and fully equipped theatres have been transformed into the type of amusement resort where a combination of pictures and vaudeville may be seen at prices ranging from 5 to 25 cents, and this number is far in excess of the new theatres that have been erected. Thus, the argument of supply and demand will again suffice to regulate matters.

In one district, that of Columbus Circle, all the theatres have been converted into the prevailing type of which I write. The Majestic, The Circle and The Lincoln Square are playing to capacity daily, though the Majestic is destined to revert to the legitimate under Mr. Frank McKee. As this gentleman has leased his Savoy Theatre to Walter Rosenberg, a transaction that caused widespread discussion, it is not

impossible that he may also decide to permit the Majestic to continue under its present prosperous regime, for, after all, amusement caterers are but human, and if one could but gaze upon the box office records of some of our most important Broadway theatres during the past season and compare these with the figures reached in the low priced vaudeville houses, there would be less amazement over prevailing conditions.

In the city of Philadelphia, there are to-day no less than twenty-five beautiful theatres with a seating capacity in excess of 1,000, that were not even thought of five years ago; the effect of their operation has been such that the city is virtually moving picture mad. One firm in the Quaker City, Taylor and Kauffmann, have amassed a fortune in a very few years, and even Nixon & Zimmermann, the leading amusement caterers for a quarter of a century in Philadelphia, have not been immune to the craze. Two of their outskirt theatres, heretofore devoted to the better class of plays, are now in the five-and-ten-cent grade. These are the Park and People's Theatres. The new William Penn Theatre, perhaps the largest in the city, and over which there has been a long litigation, has had its problem easily solved by the installation of a moving picture machine and a programme consisting of a few minor vaudeville acts at amazingly low prices. Mr. Fred Nixon Nirdlinger, who, by the way, wrote "The World and His Wife" for William Faversham, and who has been regarded as likely to figure extensively in future theatrical history as "The Son of His Father," has not permitted his ambitions to exclude him from becoming a potent factor in this easy money proposition. What is said of Philadelphia may

be repeated of every other large city, with Boston presenting a perfectly bewildering array of newly erected amusement palaces; one now in the course of erection, and which is to cost a million dollars will seat 1,000 more than the great Boston Theatre. This is a recital of but one phase of this subject at a period when its infancy has not yet been merged in maturity.

At the Eden Musee on West 23d Street, in this city, the cinematograph has been a feature for more than a decade, and a superior production of films has been maintained there, without the slightest effort to attract the patronage of the mass of people who go from one picture resort to another. Here the prevailing price of admission, fifty cents, never changes, and the conduct of the establishment for a quarter of a century has been characterized by a conservatism and dignity which entitles its directorate to the praise which is rarely accorded them.

Recently the writer, in pursuit of knowledge on this all-absorbing subject, visited the Eden Musee, his attention having been called to a device called "The Fotophone," which combines motion photography with sound in a manner so perfect that it is possible for one to behold a scene from Donizetti's "Lucia di Lammermoor," with such sterling artists as Caruso, Sembrich and Plancon, portraying their roles almost identically as at the Metropolitan Opera House.

The writer has been told that what he saw and heard was the result of four years of effort, and he can well believe it. What will happen when perfection comes to those who are striving to reproduce grand opera by means of science and artifice, is, in the writer's opinion, one of the most vital questions which a future historian can recite.

Already, the most extraordinary activity on the part of the leading European and American film manufacturers reveals untold possibilities. Stock companies in France, composed of the best players on the French stage, are permanently engaged for the creation of new subjects, by the firm known as Pathe Freres. Even such stars as Coquelin, Sarah Bernhardt, Mounet Sully, Rejane and Jane Hading, have been induced to pose as the characters in motion picture plays.

In America, stars of worldwide repute and whose salaries in their own field are literally enormous, have been under contract to the Biograph, Vitagraph, and Edison companies; and the spectacle has already been presented of Alice Lloyd singing at a vaudeville theatre in person, where a dollar scale of prices prevailed, while, less than a stone's throw away, a device known as the Cameraphone made it possible for thousands to see and hear about as perfect a counterfeit of this artiste for five cents as one might ever hope to witness.

This Cameraphone was the first of the so-called "talking pictures," and its vogue has been handicapped by financial difficulties as well as internal dissensions in the corporation itself.

Impressed with the importance of the "talking picture," and the combination of sound and motion reproduced scientifically, as a problem for future solution, the writer has asked Mr. Thomas A. Edison to give expression to his own views for the benefit of this generation and that of the rising generations.



I asked Mr. Edison if, in his opinion, the day was

near at hand when audiences could see and hear a reproduction of operas and plays, both as to action and sound, and his reply was as follows:

"Suppose that on some evening of grand opera, in which many of the greatest artists of the world were to take part, a workingman stepped up to the box office of the Metropolitan Opera House, and laid down ten cents, asking for a seat in the orchestra. The probability is that he would be arrested and rushed over to Bellevue, in order that the doctors might look into the sanity of a man who expected real grand opera for ten cents.

"Absurd as the supposition seems to be, it does not call for such a violent wrench of the imagination, after all, if we substitute the Motion Picture Theatre for the Metropolitan Opera House, and give some intelligent consideration to the possibilities of the phonograph and to what is being done to reproduce sounds simultaneously with movement.

"For nearly twenty-five years I have been of the opinion that sooner or later operas and plays would be mechanically reproduced at any time after their original performance, and as often as desired, with the singing, speaking, action, facial expression, and gesture faithfully repeated. In spite of the tremendous difficulties that are still to be overcome before this idea can be effectually realized, I am more strongly convinced to-day than ever of its practical consummation, and that at no very distant day. It may yet require several years to bring about that perfect synchronism that will be absolutely necessary to make each word, and indeed each syllable, coincide with the fractional part of the motion which originally accompanied it, and also to reproduce the full natural volume of the

voice at the same time; but very considerable progress has been made in this direction in the experiments at my laboratory, and there may be other investigators who have made still further advance along these lines.

"The immense popularity of motion pictures as a cheap, clean source of amusement is thoroughly evinced by the continual growth in the number and improved quality of the theatres in which they are presented. The drama is keenly enjoyed by great masses of people, and although in its present exposition through motion pictures it is of the "silent" kind, it has gradually educated the public to a more discriminating taste of intrinsic worth in theatrical representations. When we arrive at the point of oral and visual reproduction of opera and the drama, as sung and performed by artists and actors of note and ability, the star of the motion picture theatre will indeed be in the ascendant, and the workingman will indeed be brought to the level of the wealthy in being able to see and hear for an insignificant sum the productions upon which immense amounts are lavished for the benefit of those who have sufficiently plethoric purses to bear the expense of witnessing them."

Going further in my investigation, I consulted Mr. George Kleine, of Chicago. Mr. Kleine is one of the most persevering men who have given their aid to advancing the scope and elevating the grade of the motion picture industry. He it was who provided Henry Lee with the films by which the vast Auditorium of Chicago was turned for a period into a moving picture theatre upon an unparalleled scale. Mr. Kleine has devoted his later years to "the educational film." His energy on behalf of an uplifting era is unlimited, and

his influence has always been felt and taken advantage of by his colleagues.

I asked Mr. Kleine the same question that Mr. Edison has so decisively responded to, and here we have the former gentleman's views, expressed in his own words, verbatim:

"Basing my estimate of the future upon what has been accomplished in the past, and particularly within the last few years, no prophecy can appear to me to be too far-fetched within the limitations of sight and sound.

"The things accomplished in the field of scientific endeavor at any particular time are in advance of public knowledge. What are known as the 'talking pictures' of the day appear to me to be only a parody of the motion picture of the near future when combined with speech and song. It is practically an accomplished fact, the reproduction to the eye and the ear of complete dramatic works.

"Action in motion pictures, lifelike reproductions, have become familiar to the public. The reproduction of sound to fit the action has as yet been amateurish and unsatisfactory as demonstrated in public performances. Experimentation, however, has been turned into wonderful accomplishment in the laboratory, and within a year or two the public will see performances by means of motion pictures and sound evolved without the aid of the familiar phonograph, which will be an absolutely perfect presentment to the ear as well as the eye.

"This means that any performance by a noted actor or actress, the exact intonation, the quality and timbre, the speech as in life, will be mechanically produced,

with perfect illusion. What would we not give for such reproductions of David Garrick, Siddons, Malibran and other famous actors and singers of the past or of Bernhardt, Irving, the Booths, Cushman, or of Lincoln at Gettysburg?

"As for what the distant future has in store, the imagination may take the widest latitude and still remain within the bounds of probability. The reproduction of events while they happen in distant places, both to the eye and the ear are already indicated by experiments well under way.

"Photographic art has so far advanced that motophotography can reproduce all the colors of a scene through the camera. Do you realize what this means? That a motion picture can be made with all the colors of the original embodied in the negative; from this, it is printed upon the positive. No artists, no coloring process are required; but all the costumes, scenery, flesh tints, are photographed in the original colors, invisible to the eye, but thrown upon the curtain with absolute fidelity to the original colors, so that we now have not only motion, but color to the uttermost detail, and what effect will this have upon the theatre of the future?"

The latest effort to bring about a perfect combination between sound and motion has been that of the Gaumont Company, and this institution is vigorously progressing in its aim at this time.

The career of the Gaumont firm began before the era of the moving picture, the firm having been founded in 1890, at which date inventors the world over began to busy themselves with this art. In 1890, the Gaumont Company began business in the photographic line, manufacturing a very high grade of cam-

eras, which business, in spite of the growth of the moving picture branch, it has still continued to develop in Europe. The Gaumont Company entered into the moving picture field at the same time as Demeny and Lumiere, purchasing the former's patent on a system of taking moving pictures. Their name as moving picture pioneers rapidly came into prominence in Europe by the excellent quality of their products, both in the way of subjects and the mechanical perfection of their apparatus; their wonderful *Passion Play* in natural colors and the *chrono-projecting machine* are known the world over too much to need further comment. Alive to the future of the moving pictures, Mr. Gaumont early started experiments with a view to combining synchronously the moving picture machine and the phonograph, and was the first to obtain anything like perfect results in this direction with the *chronophone*, by which already such well-known artists as Harry Lauder and Miss Victoria Monks have been recorded by sight and sound, and they can now be reproduced, singing their songs as in life on the stage, and recently a large quantity of American subjects has been made.

There is still much to be done along these lines, and Mr. Gaumont is still working hard on the question, in such fashion as to enable whole plays as staged and acted at the various theatres, to be reproduced in word and deed. Results already obtained along these lines are indeed astonishing and give promise of a rapid solution of this thorny problem. This would seem to be the final word in moving picture progress, and will certainly in any case be a fitting crown to the pioneer efforts of Mr. Gaumont along these lines.

Mr. Gaumont's success may, in a word, be ascribed

to constant and remarkable attention to detail combined with hard work; as the Scotchman says, "Many a mickle makes a muckle."

The Great Northern Film Company's headquarters are located at Copenhagen, Denmark, and have been established in business for a period of over five years, and have made a very rapid progress in all directions. The Great Northern Film Company, or Nordisk, as it is called in Europe, was the firm next after Pathe to establish their own foreign agencies. The American branch was established here in 1908, and has been managed during that period by Ingvald C. Oes. The Great Northern films have a much envied reputation for their fine quality, and were awarded first prize, a gold medal, and also prize of honor at the International Cinematographic Exhibition at Hamburg, 1908. The picture that received these prizes was entitled "Bear Hunting in Russia," and was a remarkable film for vividness, sensation and reality, it being considered by the trade papers at that time throughout the world as one of the greatest pictures ever taken.

The Great Northern films are particularly popular in Russia. The interest for the cinematographic art there is spreading with gigantic strides, and as a natural consequence, moving picture show houses are springing up like mushrooms in that country, and this company is doing the lion's share in supplying the trade.

Other concerns have made efforts with more or less success, and at great expense, to create a similar impression on the public, but the Great Northern Film Company retains the lead by far. It has branch offices at St. Petersburg, Berlin, Vienna, London, Genoa, Christiania and Buenos Aires.

The American Biograph was invented by Herman Casler, of Canastota, New York. This moving picture machine was revolutionary in its character, and so great an improvement over the old cinematograph that it quickly came into almost exclusive use throughout the world in the leading vaudeville theatres.

The picture films employed by this machine were seven times the size of the small pictures used by the original cinematograph, and the pictures were exhibited at the rate of forty per second.

No motion picture machine used to-day can equal in performance the original biograph, but the enormous cost of the film required for this machine has forced it to give way to the present machines, which use small film.

The longest continuous picture ever exhibited by the biograph and the first picture ever photographed by artificial light, was the Jeffries-Sharkey fight at Coney Island, November 3d, 1899. The film carrying the pictures of this event was seven miles in length. During the course of the Jeffries-Sharkey fight the fighters were photographed 264,000 times.

The Evening Journal paid \$600 for one night's use of this machine during a political campaign.



The Motion Picture Screen Company, with main office and factory located at Shelbyville, Indiana, has been manufacturing the Patent Mirror Screen for moving picture shows less than one year, yet the marvelous reproducing reflection of this ingenious device has heralded its merits to the exhibitors throughout the United States, Canada and Mexico.

The whole future success of the moving picture busi-

ness depends entirely how the exhibitor shall increase and hold the interest and favor of the public.

To reproduce what the camera has recorded when the film was photographed, has been the desire, dream and goal of all those interested in the betterment and advancement of the moving picture business from its very inception.

This can only be done when the curtain which receives the light of projection is made of the material best suited to hold and record the original which was taken by the camera. The best possible material upon which to project a moving picture is a glass curtain.

Why glass? The projection of moving pictures, in other words, means that you are working in the science of light. Can you think of any substance that has so much of importance in the "Science of Light" as glass?

Glass attracts light, reflects light, condenses, projects, transmits, multiplies and magnifies light. Glass is transparent, according as to how it is used in practice, therefore a glass curtain alone will reproduce what the camera has recorded.

I am convinced that it is only a question of a few months when every moving picture theatre will be equipped with a glass curtain.



One of the most interesting features of the development in the motion picture industry is the picture play or playlet, which is now a part of every programme offered in these theatres. Mr. Belasco could do far worse than spend a day in visiting these places, for it is quite rare indeed that one finds a repetition, even in as many as six entertainments of one hour each, and

it seems that the various manufacturers of films work along separate lines, with a result that is wholly constructive and never conflicting.

I have in mind particularly the portrayals, which a small body of young people who pose for The Independent Moving Picture Company of America, are able to perfect. There are at most six persons in these little playlets, and always the same ones are used; they are young, good-looking, and not only good actors, but excellent pantomimists (and surely that is a fact worth recording). The faces of these young people are wholly new to me, and in a period of a few weeks, I have witnessed as many as eight widely different, and thoroughly well conceived plays with fully as much plot, and better by far interpretation than is given to the speaking playlets in our best vaudeville theatres. One of these, for instance, entitled "Fruits and Flowers," was not only excruciatingly funny, but the pantomime was of the best; surely no audience is ever seen in our theatres, holding its sides with uncontrollable laughter as was this intelligent body of visitors to the picture theatre.

Something more than a fad is required to create such a prosperous condition as prevails in this field, and this is easily understood after you have penetrated deeply into the subject. The fact of the matter is, that the talent used in every department, is the best obtainable, while the inducements offered, attract authors and players alike, who constantly strive to uplift the artistic level.

There is also under the title of "Powers Picture Plays," a well-equipped stock company, located in a large building in Wakefield above the Bronx. Here also playlets are evolved that are intensely interesting.

The facilities for perfecting and developing these picture plays are upon the most elaborate scale; the acting and the pantomime of Mr. Powers company in one playlet that the writer saw ("His Mother's Letter"), was fully as good as one could see on Broadway, yet not one of these young picture actors has a familiar face. The stage management is simply perfect; the ensemble work reflects the presence of a master. All labor without any of the added glory, which comes from fame, for the picture player is not advertised. The entire subject, so the writer believes, will be treated seriously before long by the critics.

It is only of very recent date that our best vaudeville theatres were given serious thought by the gentlemen who review stage affairs for the daily press; the picture play, too, is in its infancy.

As an illustration of the extent to which the film manufacturers seek artistic betterment, it may be stated that S. Lubin, the Philadelphia moving picture magnate, employs the very best writers in this country to prepare scenarios. These are edited by Epes W. Sargent, better known as "Chicot," the most able vaudeville critic of his day.



The gentlemen now prominent in the moving picture field and that of popular vaudeville are not all likely to confine their efforts exclusively in these directions. The writer is impressed with the indications which his observations have resulted in, to the effect that the Erlangers and Shuberts of a decade hence are likely to evolve from Vaudeville Endeavorers.

The achievements of at least one man point to the verity of this prophetic thought. William Fox, he

who presides so vigorously and so extensively in East 14th Street amusements, has had a career, the recital of which supplies the best reason available for the issuance of this volume. One may well point in his direction, in a desire to anticipate the personality of the next Napoleon of the Theatre.

William Fox was born in Austria on the first day of the year 1879, thus this growing magnate has reached his present remarkable position in the amusement world at the age of thirty-one, and what a career has been his! At the age of sixteen young Fox was a partner of Cliff Gordon, and under the name of the "Schmaltz Brothers" the pair appeared but a stone's throw from the scene of Mr. Fox's present day achievements, at Clarendon Hall, on East Thirteenth Street, then under the "direction" of the late Fred Lubin.

The amazing part of Mr. Fox's life story is that his extraordinary evolution has been accomplished in less than four years, for it was on July 12th, 1906, that he, pursuing the modern trend, opened a moving picture theatre in a Brooklyn store, the first, by the way, in that borough, and he continued adding to this one until he had twelve on Manhattan Island; but it was on July 12th, 1908, that Mr. Fox became a factor in the show world, for on that date he astonished his colleagues by leasing the Dewey Theatre from Messrs. Sullivan & Kraus at the largest annual rental known for a theatre not out of the ordinary in size or locale. From the outset this venture was an overwhelming success, and the young promoter at once secured the Gotham on East 125th Street from the same owners, and here a similar condition prevailed, from the date of the Fox policy, in 1908. In a few months Mr. Fox secured the Family Theatre, a block

away, and in October added the Star Theatre, on Lexington Avenue, to his circuit, and the Folly Theatre in Brooklyn in August, 1909.

As an illustration of the upheaval which this manager's methods have created in modern amusements, it need only be stated that on February 12th, 1910, at the Dewey Theatre, 16,080 persons paid for admission between the hours of 10 a. m. and 11 p. m., and that a daily attendance of between 7,000 and 8,000 is so common as to excite no comment.

William Fox is the pioneer of the present successful plan of combining moving pictures with vaudeville, and it was at the old Unique in Brooklyn, which, by an outlay of \$16,000, he had transformed into a beautiful playhouse that he inaugurated the policy now so universally adopted, and which the Keith and Proctor people were pleased to call the "Split Pea" time. Mr. Fox changed his acts three times a week, and it is he who mastered the difficulties of booking artists to conform to this policy. Since then four booking offices have been created, in emulation of the booking methods inaugurated in Brooklyn, and to-day hundreds, in fact, thousands, of theatres, all over the country, are operated on the William Fox lines. It was through a suggestion from William Fox that Archie Sheppard first introduced vaudeville acts to augment his moving picture policy at the old Manhattan Theatre.

The interesting feature, however, in this man's meteoric career is the evidence gradually growing more emphatic that he is not without ambition, that he will not be content to accumulate a vast fortune by reason of his picture and vaudeville operations, but will expand into the broader fields of theatrical endeavor.

We know that Mr. Fox is a principal stockholder in the leasing of the Academy of Music, and that he is to be authoritative as to its future policy. The spectacle of this mere boy, after three years in the field, investing his profits in New York's old home of Grand Opera, is one of the most encouraging signs as to his future that can be here recorded. Will a future historian describe William Fox's public spirited efforts for Grand Opera in English for the masses? Stranger things can happen. No managerial career will be more worthy of watching than that one which has displayed such skilful showmanship, in East 14th Street and throughout Greater New York.

But it is not only the Academy of Music project, which brings this prophetic line of thought from the writer. The new City Theatre, one of the handsomest playhouses in the world, is a Fox enterprise to the extent that a large share of its stock is in his hands. As these pages are being written, the name of the same man is associated with the erection of a new and strictly high-class legitimate theatre to be situated at 149th Street and Amsterdam Avenue.

Surely one may expect much from the future career of an entrepreneur who will make such strides between the ages of twenty-eight and thirty-one. Not since Oscar Hammerstein startled us with his remarkable building operations, has there come into the field of the theatre a "showman" whose operations promise more than has this young man of East 14th Street.



The theatrical business presents rare opportunities for young men with ambition and tenacity, and with quick wit to see an opportunity for self-betterment

when it presents itself. A case in point is that of William J. Gane, general manager of the Vaudeville Moving Picture Company of America, who has under his management the Circle and Manhattan theatres in New York, has another theatre under construction in Brooklyn, still another in Easton, Pa., and is still seeking other sites for theatres. The booking branch of his office numbers many of the most important vaudeville moving picture theatres in the country.

Mr. Gane is only thirty-two years of age, and he has arrived. It can be said in his case that he was brought up in the theatre. At the age of twelve he found a position as water boy at the Empire Theatre, in Philadelphia. Later he rose to the position of office boy in the business offices of the Park Theatre, Philadelphia, leaving there to fill a like position at the Auditorium Theatre in the same city.

In course of time and by assiduous application to his duties, he was offered the position of assistant treasurer at the Grand Opera House, Philadelphia, by Henry W. Savage, for his season of grand opera in English, and when Mr. Savage came to New York with his opera organization, locating permanently at the American Theatre, he brought along Mr. Gane to fill there the same position he held at the Grand Opera House.

When Henry Greenwall and Albert Weis leased the American Theatre, Mr. Gane was retained by them, but was promoted to treasurer. Thompson and Dundy, managers of the New York Hippodrome, were attracted by Mr. Gane's courtesy to patrons and quick selling ability as treasurer at the American, and they made him an offer to become treasurer of the Hippodrome, which he accepted.

As a manager Mr. Gane began his career at the Manhattan Theatre, since razed by the Pennsylvania Railroad, where he presented moving pictures. His success there was marked by crowded houses, and when he was forced to vacate he built the present Manhattan Theatre at Broadway and 31st Street.



The evolution of motion photography was gradual; the magic lantern was the first development, and we find that the very same men who figured in the manufacture of the stereopticons are prominent to-day in the moving picture world.

The Illustrated Song was an earlier arrival by far than the cinematograph and the "Animated Song Sheet" was a further development, but the latter did not survive, whereas the Illustrated Song has had an uninterrupted vogue which is constantly increasing.

The pioneer in this field was Allan May, but he did not score with audiences to the extent that his successors have. It was in the early 90's that the craze began. At this period an operatic tenor who once sang with Patti, Alonzo Hatch, entered the illustrated song field. He had become passé in opera, but his voice, though thin, was sweet, and it was the first of the tearful voices so necessary to affect an audience in a darkened auditorium. Hatch found the new field a lucrative one, but it was when Meyer Cohen came here from California that the illustrated song furore began in earnest.

It was said of Mr. Cohen that he could sing in New York and be heard in San Francisco, at any rate, in my forty years' association with opera and musical endeavor I have heard voices of various calibre, but

such a voice as this man had I had never heard. He was advertised as the California Baritone; a feature of his repertory was a song about somebody's "Lost Child." In due time this song, together with the illustrated slides that went with it, brought about a veritable epidemic of singers with plaintive voices.

About a year after Cohen's vogue started, there came into Keith's Union Square Theatre a duo, Maxwell and Simpson. Maxwell had a voice that was more lachrymose than musical, perhaps it was the former for the very reason that it was not the latter. At any rate, these two created a positive sensation with their Fire Songs. Alfred Simpson was the electrical member of the duo. He had been a musical director of comic opera and a composer for many years, but he became a great factor as an electrician.

Maxwell and Simpson's vogue lasted nearly a decade. At all times their salary was the largest of any in this field. Finally they separated. Maxwell still survives with his fire songs, though now he gives playlets with a supporting company, while Simpson manufactures the majority of the slides which are used to-day in the 30,000 moving picture theatres. Recently he invented "the solar screen," and with this device as an added asset, he to-day is the principal provider of slides in this country for illustrated songs.

To return to Meyer Cohen, he became so popular and his industry was so marked that he attracted the attention of Charles K. Harris, the famous ballad composer, whose "After the Ball" holds the world's record for sustained popularity.

Mr. Harris had, up to about eight years ago, conducted his extended publishing business from Milwaukee, where he still has interests. He came to New

York, to remain permanently, in 1902, where Mr. Cohen became his general manager.

It is worthy of relation that in the eight years which have elapsed since these two gentlemen came together, an enormous institution has come into being. Mr. Harris started modestly in West 28th Street, where "Tinpan Alley" got its name; then he moved to West 31st Street, to larger quarters; but he could only find room even here by adding an additional floor to his lease. A few months ago Mr. Harris moved to his present quarters in the Columbia building, and here he is now located, having gradually extended his business until it is now the most important music publishing house in this country. Here, too, are now published the scores of practically all of the comic opera and musical comedy successes, Mr. Harris having been quick to grasp opportunity. The staff of composers and lyric writers available to him to-day is the largest and most prominent in the world.

The late Marcus Witmark was the first, however, to expand from song publishing into broader fields, and he evolved a business so vast that it was possible for a manager or impresario to go to the Witmarks and secure not only the rights to operas, but also the costumes, scenery and even the entire organization; they have to-day in their catalogue every musical production of the last quarter of a century. They also have branch establishments in the European capitals. The conduct of their enterprise is illustrative of American achievement, and therefore entitled to figure in a volume of this character.

J. Fred Helf is another instance of the reward which comes from persistent effort. Originally half of the team Helf and Yost, the two found favor in the va-

riety theatres in the 90's. Helf first attracted attention by his compositions for Lew Dockstader, and in due time was forced to abandon stage work entirely, and is at this time at the head of his own publishing house.

Leo Feist started a small publishing business in a small room on West 28th Street, less than a dozen years ago. He made a special feature of announcing his business in the following rhyme:

"You can't go wrong
With a Feist song."

He must have been well within his rights in this declaration, for his business has grown to gigantic proportions. To-day he occupies an entire building, but a few doors from Broadway, and he maintains the year around an extensive corps of writers, who have the faculty for turning out that delight of the publisher, a "seller."

Will Rossiter, in Chicago, has built up a large business principally by writing songs himself and creating a wide market for them.

J. H. Remick & Co. are at the head of a publishing house so flourishing that they are the subject of general comment in the public press. It remains for the writer only to observe that much of their resultant success is due to the remarkable energy possessed by their chief of staff, Mose Gumble, whose popularity with singers of songs has made of him an invaluable asset. Mr. Gumble is the husband of the cleverest of these singers, for—I was going to say he was Mr. Clarice Vance—but Mr. Gumble is anything but that kind of a husband.

The tendency of such firms as Charles K. Harris

and the Witmarks to expand into the operatic and production field, which was first found practicable by T. Harms & Co., has resulted in a new element coming into prominence as song publishers. The latter are so large in number and their operations are of so recent a date that a record of their achievements will undoubtedly prove more availing in a future volume of this character.



As a field for progressive and enterprising young men, modern amusement catering offers opportunities unexcelled by few, if any, lines of endeavor. Organization and capital have reduced the dangerous nature of amusement enterprises, as they stood some 25 or 30 years ago, to what can really be termed a "Legitimate Business," with not half as much danger to the cautious and conservative operator as an ordinary speculation in stocks or real estate. That young men of brains' have unequaled opportunity in catering to the ever-growing popular demand for amusement, is amply demonstrated by the success which has crowned the efforts of the aggressive firm of Wilmer & Vincent.

These two young men, whose original partnership was formed for the purpose of writing sketches and playing the same in the then "infant" vaudeville, first felt the managerial bee buzzing in their bonnets when they were offered an opportunity to rent a hall in the city of Utica, N. Y., along in the 90's, and in which they gave the citizens of that city a sample of vaudeville.

Let it not be understood that their efforts were crowned with an instant success. There were many

stormy days, and sailing was not all smooth, but, to their everlasting credit be it said, they, by self-sacrifice and denial, met all their obligations promptly, and in a matter of a couple of years in that city, found themselves safely ensconced in a handsome little playhouse with a clientele that was constantly increasing in size.

From then to the present day, their vogue has been gradual, but the roots went deep. There was nothing of the mushroom nature in their enterprises, and whatever they undertook to do, they endeavored to do well, and invariably with a good deal of success.

Keeping pace with the times, they have met all conditions as same arose. The most potent influence for their success was the idea that a really good entertainment must be given at all times. They believed that too often failure in vaudeville was due to the fads that managers strove to give too little to their patrons for the money received, and the result has been that in the cities catered to by Wilmer & Vincent, the very best vaudeville has been presented, and their patrons have at all times had the advantage of seeing the most expensive and most exclusive headline acts.

Both members of the firm are stanch believers in the success of vaudeville as a strong factor in American amusement circles, and as long as the theatre flourishes, they believe that high-class vaudeville, properly presented, will remain the most popular form of amusement to be had.

John W. Considine, who in late years has jumped to the front rank of, and become one of, the most potent factors in American vaudeville, has required only six years in which to construct one of the most extensive vaudeville circuits under single management that the world knows anything about.

Absolutely buttressed against attack in the West, his invasion of the East with popular priced vaudeville is now well under way and the Sullivan-Considine circuit will, within the twelvemonth, be a transcontinental service, the first in American theatrical history.

Mr. Considine was almost "born to the show business." From his earliest boyhood days he exhibited a pronounced liking and ability for the producing and managerial side of the craft, yet only in the last half dozen years has his success been on a scale that has brought him into international prominence.

Born in Chicago in 1863, he received his education in the Catholic schools of Illinois and later at St. Mary's College in Kansas and in the University of Kansas.

In 1889 he went out to the State of Washington and located in the city of Seattle, then little more than an improved lumber camp. He was gifted then, however, with the same foresight which is now one of his chief characteristics, and through varying fortunes, he stayed by his new home and his convictions, and has remained by them until to-day.

He still makes Seattle the chief headquarters of the Sullivan-Considine circuit, although the business of that wide-flung concern brings him so often to New York City that New York claims him as a resident. For that matter, Chicago does the same thing, and so does San Francisco.

Not only has Mr. Considine created, and in few years, a remarkable theatrical organization, but he has at the same time established a unique position in relation to the rest of the vaudeville world. Although his many houses serve vaudeville at ten, twenty and thirty cents, the houses he has built, is building, or

is about to build, are among the finest in America. They are beautiful structures architecturally, and absolutely modern. They are as fit for grand opera as for popular priced vaudeville. Every city of size in the West has one or more of them, and it is the plan of Mr. Considine that every city of size in the East shall be similarly provided. He is fast acquiring sites to this end.

In his own city of Seattle, Mr. Considine is one of the financial, social and political powers. He is giving his city beautiful buildings, such as the new Majestic Theatre which is declared the finest vaudeville structure in America, and the new Orpheum Theatre, to be ready for business by September 1st. Hundreds of thousands of dollars of the Sullivan and Considine money are going into such structures as these all along the circuit, which speaks well for the scale of their operations and the permanency of their magnitudinous plans.

Besides his Sullivan and Considine interests, Mr. Considine also owns the Orpheum Theatre in Seattle, the Orpheum Theatre in Spokane, and the Orpheum Theatre in Portland, and acts in the capacity of general manager of the Northwest Orpheum Circuit, which is part and parcel of the general Orpheum organization.

A word here would be in order as to efficiency which characterizes the business staff of this concern. In New York Chris Brown is in charge, and he has shown himself to be one of the best of generals. To him is left the selection of the vast array of talent provided for the entertainment of all of these theatres. Mr. Brown came here from Chicago a few years

ago, and found the firm's offices in a sad state. He at once set about to regulate matters with an ultimate result, wholly constructive. He is a firm disciplinarian, yet always courteous and kind to his subordinates.

In Mr. Brown's office Abraham Feinberg was an office boy three years ago; to-day he has charge of the publicity department of the New York end, a responsible position. In Chicago, Mr. Paul Goudron is in charge, he having succeeded Mr. Brown when the latter came to New York to take charge here. Mr. Goudron is credited with much energy, and he has helped in the Middle West to extend the territory over which the Sullivan & Considine trade-mark reigns.

Alexander Pantages has built up a circuit of theatres in the last few years to avail himself of the existing conditions in vaudeville. He books his acts in the Empire Theatres, Calgary and Edmonton, Alberta; Calgary being the opening point of his circuit at present. He owns and controls theatres in the following towns:

Pantages Theatre,	Spokane, Wash.	Vaudeville.
"	"	Seattle, Wash. Vaudeville.
Lois	"	Seattle, Wash. Dramatic.
Pantages	"	Vancouver, B. C.
"	"	Victoria, B. C.
"	"	Tacoma, Wash.
"	"	Bellingham, Wash.
"	"	Portland, Ore.
"	"	Sacramento, Cal.

Mr. Pantages books acts for The Chutes Theatre, San Francisco, and now has a new theatre in course of construction in that city; he also has a new Class A Theatre in course of construction in Los Angeles

with seven-story office building in conjunction. This enterprising manager also owns and controls theatres in Denver and Pueblo, Col., and St. Joseph, Mo.

Louis Pincus is the New York representative of this chain of theatres, and Richard Pitrot the European factor. In Chicago, where most of the new acts evolve, Mr. E. R. Lang, an old-time performer, looks out for Mr. Pantages' interest.



One of the main purposes of these writings is to place on record the priority of all achievements of significance. There has always existed a certain contradictory status as to the first to present dramatic playlets in vaudeville. In the previous volume the writer proclaimed that before the present generation of vaudeville endeavorers were born dramatic playlets had vogue in variety theatres and authors were under salary all the year round to evolve them. It was Phillip F. Nash who, for two decades, has been a vaudeville factor, and is now one of the chief officers of the United Booking Offices, who first set the precedent which has meant so much to modern vaudeville. He had tried a team known as Redding and Stanton in "A Happy Pair" at Keith's Theatre in Philadelphia, and it was Mr. Nash who encouraged J. Austin Fynes to engage Charles Dickson to appear in "The Salt Cellar," a procedure which caused a perfect stampede into vaudeville of legitimate actors.

The impression prevails that the cinematograph was the first of the moving picture devices, whereas while it was the Lumiere invasion which first created a furore, a regard for accuracy necessitates the state-

ment that Mr. Nash introduced in the Philadelphia Keith House a machine known as the "Eidoloscope" before the cinematograph was heard of, and this was the very first exhibition of moving pictures on any stage in America. This was a very imperfect machine, and the films were crude, but the novelty was so great that Mr. Nash was able to retain this device for two weeks, then came the Vitascope, but the "Eidoloscope" was absolutely the first of all!

CHAPTER VIII

HAS NEW YORK TOO MANY THEATRES?—THE KNIGHT OF THE BOX-OFFICE—THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF WAGENHALS AND KEMPER—MANAGER JUDAH'S LONG CAREER—THE OLD-TIME THEATRICAL BUSINESS MAN, AND HIS POTENCY IN THIS ERA—WHY THE EXPERIENCED "AGENT" OF OTHER DAYS IS STILL IN DEMAND—SOME INCONSISTENCIES NOTED.

Has New York really too many theatres? The question has called for consideration, because of the complications, which at this time surround the situation. A hasty survey would indicate that the persistent building of new amusement temples was unwarranted, in view of the disastrous experiences, which have characterized the past theatrical season; yet, more theatres have been transformed into moving picture resorts, or relegated to cheap priced vaudeville, than have been replaced, or even contemplated, by the various managers in the same space of time.

The Messrs. Shubert have been active in this respect, and seemingly wish to obtain every available location in the Long Acre district, but their newer establishments are singularly small; on West 39th and 41st Streets they have built three theatres, the combined capacity of which is smaller than that of the Casino, or any of the long-standing playhouses. However, they have all been found large enough. Aside from the Shuberts, most of the building has

been prompted by a desire on the part of prominent producers to possess a production house of their own. Within a year Messrs. Dillingham, Liebler, Brady, Arthur have followed the example, which was set for them by Messrs. Wagenhals and Kemper, who, through the medium of a single playhouse, the Astor, have unearthed such sterling play property, as "Paid in Full" and "Seven Days"; the financial results of which will more than pay for the total cost of this exceedingly valuable building.

New theatres are justified, as the population of the greater city and rapid transit facilities expand. The Hippodrome, which has a seating capacity as large as seven of the Shubert theatres combined, and is used twice daily at that, has proved itself a serious competitor of the ordinary theatre, but the theatre-going public gradually increases to an extent which absorbs every new condition placed before it. By the same reasoning, the Manhattan Opera House, whatever its new policy may be, will have to be reckoned with, for its capacity exceeds the combined accommodations of the Belasco, the Liberty, the Hackett, and even the New Amsterdam Theatre, so that if Mr. Hammerstein does not put it to vaudeville use, and, the magnificent auditorium becomes the home of spectacle or melodrama, the effect on regular theatres will be very apparent, until the new condition is absorbed by an equivalent increase in theatre-goers. In this instance, fortunately, the near proximity of the Pennsylvania Station will cause such an addition of suburban patronage to all theatres, and particularly to the Manhattan, that the Hippodrome experience is not likely to be repeated.

During the period from January 15th, 1910, to March

ist, a unique condition prevailed in theatredom, which would go far to emphasize the declaration that theatres are not too plentiful. During this period practically every high-class theatre housed a "hit," yet it was almost impossible to procure a seat for any one of a dozen of the biggest playhouses, unless booked far in advance. A decrease in business was not recorded until beautiful spring weather became a menace, and outdoor exercises proved more attractive.

During these six weeks a half dozen or more vaudeville theatres were playing to average weekly receipts, ranging from \$10,000 to \$18,000. Time surely does create remarkable conditions! It is not so long ago that an odd day matinee would fail to draw a corporal's guard to theatres; to-day the best of them give matinees on Tuesday or Thursday, with receipts as large as those of Saturday, while the daily matinee at the vaudeville houses is a sight to behold. The Victoria and the American rarely show an empty seat at a Monday matinee, while the Fifth Avenue Theatre is always more crowded in the afternoon than in the evening, whatever the day may be.

That this condition is greatly due to the era of the motion picture is unquestionably true, thousands of new theatre-goers are created by the lure of the camera man; the appetite for enlarged amusements is satiated in the bigger establishments, and gradually the patrons of the picture houses move up the scale of offerings until their influence is felt even at the Metropolitan Opera House.

It is not generally known that any firm or individual has made a specialty of securing sites for the erection of theatres and temples of entertainment; therefore it will be interesting to record here that Mr. Hartie I.

Phillips has located more theatres, and has also consummated more transactions by which they have come into being, than any one person in New York City.

He had the foresight necessary in such a field of endeavor, and to him is due the movement to locate the first theatre upon what is now considered the greatest theatrical block in the world. In 1892 he procured the land from seventeen different owners upon which the American Theatre on 42d Street, now stands; since that time he has located three others on the block, viz.: the New Amsterdam, the Liberty, and has sold the land twice where the Hackett Theatre stands; he has also sold the land twice where the Maxine Elliott Theatre stands on 39th Street, and was associated in obtaining the site for the successful Columbia Theatre at 47th Street and Broadway. He located and sold twice the handsome structure rapidly approaching completion which will be occupied by the B. P. O. Elks, No. 1, of New York City, and which will have a small theatre connected therewith. His knowledge as regards theatrical conditions from a commercial standpoint were well expressed in a full-page article that appeared in the New York Herald in 1909.

The knight of the box office has made a place for himself in affairs of the theatre, despite that his calling is not one which brings him conspicuously before the general public. There has always been some question as to who is entitled to the rank of dean among these gentry; James Scullion, now at Wallack's, has been the treasurer of some theatre, known as Wallack's for more than thirty years; George E. Audie, now of the Lyceum, has been with Daniel Frohman a quarter of a century, while Max Hirsch spent twenty-six years in the box office of The Metropolitan Opera

House, from which position he has only recently retired.

These gentlemen are the relics of the old school of treasurers; the tendency is not, however, for a perpetuation for such lengthy service. The box offices of the majority of our theatres to-day are occupied by young men who graduate from office boys, ushers, etc., even the position of treasurer no longer holds them for any length of time. The reason for this is simple enough. A manager, like Percy Williams, for instance, inaugurates his career with one theatre; gradually he adds to his possessions, and as these increase, he promotes the usher to subordinate position in the box office. In due time the latter becomes treasurer, and finally, when Mr. Williams secures a new theatre, the treasurer becomes its local manager. The assistant takes the treasurer's place, and a long series of promotions are a natural result, which may seem a trifling matter to record, yet it establishes the fact that the rising generation of workers in the business department of theatricals have greater opportunities to rise than was possessed by their predecessors.

Ray Comstock's career is an illustration of the truth of the foregoing. He was able to reach no higher position at the Casino, after he became its manager, so he started in to produce plays and operettas for himself, and he was remarkably successful from the outset.

The present tendency for one management to control a number of theatres, presents more real incentive for worthy effort and provides the youthful beginner in American theatres with an almost positive guarantee of reaching the very top.

Marcus Loew has at least fifteen theatres on Manhattan Island; three years ago he had none! There-

fore, it is reasonable to suppose that the employees of his first theatre, at the time he inaugurated his policy there, are not to be found there to-day; some are treasurers of the houses acquired later, and others are managers. As it is with Mr. Loew, so it is with William Morris, William Fox, William Gane and Keith and Proctor. It is the same with the producers, Liebler & Co., Charles Frohman, H. W. Savage, Charles Dillingham, William A. Brady, Klaw and Erlanger, and others, practice a well-developed plan of promotions; they are also extremely loyal to their employees, and not one of these managers would think of adding a new applicant for a position to their business staffs, until every one of their time-tried regulars has been worthily placed.

I have known Liebler & Co. to refuse a brother manager's request to employ a friend of the latter, because it meant that to do so, a deserving member of their own staff would be denied promotion. Charles Frohman's loyalty in this respect is not confined to his business executives, but also to the hundreds of players who are dependent upon him. Their welfare is safe in his hands. Frohman would make a sacrifice in casting a play rather than go outside his reserve forces, while one of his dependents was unplaced.



Modern managerial methods are aptly illustrated by observation of the regime of Messrs. Wagenhals and Kemper at the Astor Theatre. These gentlemen, though they had passed through a vigorous career preliminary to their metropolitan venture, were practically unknown to the general public when they made

their debut as amusement caterers less than four years ago.

The firm, consisting of Lincoln A. Wagenhals and Collin Kemper, had, it is true, made many noteworthy productions on tour, and had shown much ingenuity in amalgamating a number of stars who jointly found potency, whereas individually their powers to attract had given evidence of a decline. The organization headed by Louis James, Frederick Warde and Kathryn Kidder would have been a powerful one, even had it not been supplemented with productions of classical plays with perhaps the most perfect ensembles, and with the strictest attention to the—*mise en scene*—that provincial audiences have witnessed at any period; and when are named such works as "A Winter's Tale," "The Taming of the Shrew," "Twelfth Night," and "A Midsummer Night's Dream," it may be understood that these managers, when they came into the metropolis, were possessed of an artistic discernment of no mean calibre. Mr. Kemper's fame as a stage director was known to the New York press and to all who have to do with the theatre itself.

Thus, when it was announced that one of the most valuable locales in New York's theatre district had been secured by this firm, and that the Astor Theatre (the writer, by the way, suggested this title to a morning newspaper which had solicited suggestions before erection), would be their workshop, many were skeptical and few indeed were optimistic as to the results which would be there advanced.

It was known that the land was so valuable, as to be almost prohibitive for theatrical use, and every inch of the property has ever since vindicated its vast valuation. The theatre opened, modestly enough, on

Sept. 21, 1906, with Miss Annie Russell as the stellar feature of a truly superb production of Shakespeare, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," and was followed by a series of productions that require no recital here, save that a musical production in which Raymond Hitchcock was starred would undoubtedly have had one of these runs for which the theatre and its management are now famed, but for the unfortunate trouble which befell the star himself, and which interrupted what appeared to predict an unprecedented vogue.

"Paid in Full" the play which Wagenhals & Kemper had the courage to produce in a theatre of their own, was the first effort to find appreciation from the pen of Eugene Walter. Other managers who preside less than a stone's throw from the Astor, had opportunity to possess this now phenomenal success, but Mr. Walter's experience with other managers is a tale well known and requires no repetition here. Suffice to state that with a cast containing seven players and without a star, it not only scored one of the greatest runs of modern times, but has enriched the managers and the author to a degree that has had few parallels in amusement history.

A similar achievement was scored with "The Man From Home," in which by arrangement with Liebler & Co., the play in which William Hodge was featured ran all of one season and a good portion of another, to receipts of a truly remarkable order. In this instance it is but fair to state that the piece had made a remarkable record in Chicago where its run exceeded three hundred nights; but the fact remains that the Astor's managers were pursuing a policy of long runs and were providing the vehicles for their perpetuation.

But the most remarkable of the firm's achievements was their current attraction, "Seven Days." Here was a play of which no one knew anything at all. The authors were unknown, and the fact that it was farcical was not conducive to general confidence. The cast was short and included several striking players, but of no great celebrity; hence, the first night was not regarded as an event of great importance. Nevertheless, that same first night will not soon be forgotten by any of those who were so fortunate as to be included in the astonished gathering. "Seven Days" brought about a renaissance of farce, and not since the days of Leonard Grover's "Our Boarding House" have audiences given way to such uncontrollable laughter as is nightly witnessed at 45th street and Broadway. Immediately our emulatory managers began to read farces, and, sure enough, the season has been notable for many successes, such as "The Lottery Man," "The Lucky Star," etc.

How long "Seven Days" is to run cannot be foretold. The stage setting of this farce is without a doubt the most ingenious and concrete of any produced in a generation. This is not a critical volume, but the writer cannot resist to pay a tribute to Miss Florence Reed's interpretation of a decidedly difficult role, and the friends of her illustrious father, Roland Reed, must note the inheritance of that irresistible unction for which the deceased comedian was famous.

Mr. A. Judah was born in Cincinnati and clerked in the clothing business, with Joseph Brooks in Memphis. His first theatrical experience was with various companies through the South, one of which included the comedian, Harry Rainforth, and in the cast were

Mr. and Mrs. Selden Irwin (Harry Rainforth's mother).

Mr. Judah's next venture was with Mitchell & Robinson, in the Peoples' Theatre, at the present time, Havlin's, St. Louis. His next move was to Kansas City, where he associated himself with J. E. Sackett and opened the Kansas City Museum on Delaware Street.

Later he built the Cyclorama of Missionary Ridge and ran same on the corner of Eighth Street and Broadway, Kansas City. He afterward went to Philadelphia and ran the Cyclorama there, returning to Kansas City where he formed a partnership with William Thomas, leasing the Ninth Street Theatre, Ninth and May Streets. When Mr. Thomas retired, M. H. Hudson bought out his interest and the firm built the Grand Opera House, Seventh and Walnut Streets; Mr. Judah assuming active management of the theatre, and he has always attended to every detail of the business. Mr. Judah has also an equal interest with Stair & Havlin, Nicolai, the Jacob Litt Estate, and A. W. Dingwall, in the Krug Theatre, Omaha, Neb., and he is also a real estate owner in Kansas City.

Mr. Judah is perhaps the best liked showman in the West. He also holds so high a place in the amusement calling, that one would imagine he had a multitude of theatres, whereas, at no time has this firm, or either member of it, been extensive holders of theatrical property. It is in the conduct of their Grand Opera House in the big western city that Hudson and Judah have achieved their greatest renown, and this house is known all over this county as "the best dollar house in America."

Mr. Judah has reduced to a science his policy of catering to his public, with a result that is best illustrated by the statement that really all of the attractions which play the "Grand" at a dollar scale for the best seats, play in other cities at \$1.50 and even at \$2.00. Yet, at the lower schedule in the popular "Grand," receipts of \$10,000 for a week are common, year after year. The same attractions repeat their achievements here, too.

In the business department of the stage, there has always been a wide field for the ambitious endeavorer. "Harry" Miner was an advance agent forty years ago, and he was accorded a salary of \$150.00 a week, even at that period, while J. F. Zimmerman of the firm of Nixon and Zimmerman was paid as high as \$1000.00 a month, even in the late 60's.

John R. Rogers, who is still in demand as an avant courier, was perhaps the most prominent of the publicity promoters of a generation ago, and he certainly did effective work for the stars whose interests were vested in his hands. John Rickaby was paid \$150.00 at this period, as was also John E. Warner, whose long and honorable career has enabled him to compete with the present day manager to this day. In olden times these men were called agents, and they were called upon to do all of the work, which is to-day divided up among a large staff. The agent then not only routed his company, and proceeded in advance of them, but he designed all of the printing—contracted for it, did the press work, (there were no typewriters or mimeographs in those days) and he was forced to give his services to his employer during the summer period gratis.

There are to be found to-day holding honorable and

exalted positions, men who served with distinction in the period of which I write, and these men are the veritable mainstays of the great institutions of to-day with which they are identified.

Dudley McAdow, who is a vital force in the Stair and Havlin chain of theatres, has occupied every possible position in a theatre and "on the road," that such as he is to be found doing the practical work in the modern managerial offices is logical enough.

Harry A. Lee, who is one of the greatest factors in the Klaw and Erlanger booking system, has had a career so crowded with wide and varied experiences, that he could be regarded as a human encyclopedia. His head must contain somewhere within its confines a theatrical map. Thirty-four years ago he was as likely to be with a circus in the summer as with a big minstrel show in the winter, but long before that he had his schooling in the old J. Alex Brown agency, then located on Broadway near 14th street.

William W. Randall was placed in charge of the Shubert's booking department two years ago—undoubtedly because he was one of the pioneers in this field. He was Charles Frohman's partner a quarter of a century ago when the two started a booking agency in the Daly's Theatre building. Julius Cahn began in this office to build up the vast institution over which he to-day presides.

Charles MacGeachy has been an advance man for Mr. Frohman alone for 25 years, and is still with that appreciative employer. Here have we the real man of letters, and it is to his credit that the new generation of theatrical business men has brought forth no one capable of competing with him in his particular line.

Gustave Frohman, who may be considered the dean of "agents," is yet active in his brother's employ. At the outset of his career it was he who seemed destined to become the Napoleon of theatredom, and during the famous "Hazel Kirke" era, Gustave had the complete control of the many companies on tour with this, the most successful play of a century. Daniel and Charles were also identified with this regime, but Gustave was the supreme figure. It is a pleasant duty for this writer to refer to the survival of these old-time workers of a precarious period of the theatre, and that those who are still with us are holding the most exalted and responsible positions as aids to the present-day magnates is the best tribute that can be paid to their quality.

Charles Burnham, of Wallacks, than whom there exists to-day no more worthy example, was an usher in Mr. Daly's first Fifth Avenue theatre, when it was located back of the old Fifth Avenue Hotel. Since then he has been holding every place which a theatre can offer, while on tour he was Mr. Daly's guiding spirit.

Thomas F. Shea, who has been Charles Frohman's manager at the Empire Theatre from the day that establishment came into being, also was an usher in Mr. Daly's first theatre, and he was "ahead" of Robson and Crane in the palmy days of that glorious duo.

Everywhere we find these men the active and compelling figures in modern theatrical enterprises. William Morris ended his worries for all time when he selected Edward L. Bloom as his general manager, but Julius Cahn seems to have suffered as great a loss as has been the gain of Morris.

Frank McKee, while not as active at present as at

other portions of his successful career, is nevertheless a splendid illustration to point to in a desire to show the type of man the pioneer theatrical pathfinder was. He was only a lithographer thirty years ago, but he was modest, gentlemanly and, above all, a hard worker. He hailed from Louisville, the city that also developed Mary Anderson and Marc Klaw. Mr. McKee was employed by the late Charles Hoyt, and it was he who created the era of great prosperity for his unique musical farces—in due time he became Hoyt's partner, and as a result also amassed a fortune.

J. H. Decker, who seems to have brought to the Messrs. Shubert their greatest results as to expansion, is a "Knight of the Road," and he had his schooling in the minstrel field—where he was ever a potent factor. He has invariably been engaged in a pitched managerial battle, and is never happier than when called upon to compete with an opponent. Thus it was to be expected that—upon his assuming charge of the "open door" forces that developments would come quickly and surely vigorously.

The writer hopes to be understood as not desiring to decry the merits of the modern theatrical business men. Yet a tribute to their predecessors, who have passed away, and those who still labor along with them will surely be approved of.

The present day methods alone would serve to explain why men like John R. Rogers was, and perhaps still is, are not to be found in advance of the famous stars of this era. To-day, an important manager has vast facilities in his New York office—which were lacking for his ancestors. Telephones, typewriters and other devices which progress has developed naturally are availed of to such an extent, that in the New

York office a great majority of the labor is performed. Instead of the old time press agent, we have to-day the national press agent, who has charge of a multitude of theatres and attractions.

E. A. Pidgeon was paid \$150.00 a week by William Morris, but he looked after the publicity of a chain of theatres, and he did it very thoroughly, too. It has been stated that Martin Beck indulges in the luxury of a \$10,000 a year publicity promoter. Mark Luescher being the individual referred to. If this be true there would still be a justification for the outlay wholly aside from Luescher's unquestionable ability, in that he presides over the vast Orpheum Circuit of theatres, and has equipped a system of advertising for these which enables the management to dispense with the services of a local press agent.

By the same token Percy Williams, who has no less than ten theatres within a radius of one hundred miles, would be fully justified in paying Miss Nellie Revell a huge salary for the prodigious amount of work she performs, and for the wide field she covers.

The national press agent, however, is not always able to qualify. The principle which holds good in motion photography, that of duplicating a worthy effort a thousandfold, only partly applies here, for a star, particularly a feminine one such as Madame Nazimova for instance, requires to-day even more so than forty years ago a brilliant representative who is capable of the very best kind of newspaper work—therefore it is to be assumed that Albert H. Canby who has charge of Madame Nazimova's tours is worth as much (if not more) as any of those gentlemen who cover a wide territory.

Louis Nethersole, who has charge of Margaret Ang-

lin's tours, and who for a long period managed the business affairs of his sister, Olga Nethersole, finds ample scope for his ability and energy in the tremendous publicity which he procures for his star, and it is to such exponents as Canby and Nethersole that we must look for a survival of the old time "agent" for these men labor under the same principles and perform the same duties which were a necessary requisite to the John Rickabys and the John Rogers of a generation ago.



The inconsistency of managerial methods is often illustrated in special instances, which call for mention solely through the writer's desire to point out opportunities that have not been availed of.

I never could understand why Dallas Welford, as genuine a portrayer of comedy as there exists to-day in this country, should be relegated to an obscure place, comparatively speaking, in the reckoning of theatrical achievements. Mr. Welford is undoubtedly the most competent low comedian seen on the American stage since J. L. Toole, an American actor, by the way, who had to go to England to find his career. In "Mr. Hopkinson," Welford lifted a stupid farce to a bearable state and was so excruciatingly funny in the title role that a vogue was created; despite that not the least effort was made to accentuate the strong typical character, which he so artistically outlined. It is true that the farce itself was so bad that it almost overwhelmed the merits of the one redeeming feature; nevertheless, the circumstances were identical with those which characterized the "hits" achieved by John T. Raymond in "Col,

Sellers," and William J. Florence in "The Mighty Dollar."

Again, in a salacious musical comedy at The New York Theatre, ("The Girl with the Whooping Cough"), Welford, by reason of a clear cut typification of a seemingly impossible role, lifted what was perhaps the most inane production of a year of failures to an almost receptive state. It was the same in "The Girl from Rector's." This player seems to be relegated to this sort of vehicle for the display of his uncommon ability.

Frank Keenan is a sterling actor who arrived at a stellar period in his career only through having achieved a continued series of successes; all of his efforts, too, whether they have been recorded in vaudeville, or the highest class productions in the best theatres, have been characterized with a dignity and reverence which long since caused his name to be regarded as possessing value for stellar honors, and yet, Keenan is still to be properly fitted with a play. In "The Heights," which for some incomprehensible reason did not score, Henry B. Harris provided him with an excellent play, but it was Mr. Harris' unlucky year, for he recorded at least a dozen failures in the season of 1909-10.

"The Heights," which was the work of William Anthony McGuire, had all of the elements for success. The cast which was listed for Mr. Keenan's support, while composed of many of the best known players of to-day, was hardly a fortunate one; at least two of the characters, who, for want of emphasis of their salient points, failed to stand out, were practically lost as far as the author's intentions were concerned. In a revival, with the roles carefully entrusted, and the stag-

ing vested in the hands of a master who will "put over" the footlights a concrete and comprehensible recital of the story it unfolds, "The Heights" would become a property of great commercial value.

CHAPTER IX

THE GENERAL STAGE MANAGER—CLAUDE L. HAGEN'S USEFUL CAREER—AN ERA OF REVIVALS AT HAND—WHAT HAS BECOME OF RUDOLPH ARONSON?—THE DECLINE IN THE SWAY OF MELODRAMA NOT PERMANENT—AL H. WOODS ENTERS THE BROADER FIELDS—STAIR AND HAVLIN'S ACHIEVEMENTS—THE ERA OF AFFLUENCE FOR THE AMERICAN PLAYWRIGHT—THE WOMAN PLAYWRIGHT—THE BENEFITS TO BE DERIVED FROM CONTESTS—HOW MARTHA MORTON FIRST BECAME KNOWN THROUGH A CONTEST IN THE NEW YORK WORLD—THE SPLENDID INCENTIVE PROVIDED BY H. B. HARRIS AND MARTIN BECK—THE PRODUCER, A VITAL FIGURE IS HE!

The stage manager has been less credited with his achievements than any other class of endeavorers in the amusement field. Few of the men on whom the responsibility of stage offerings entail, are known to the general public, yet their efforts are regarded by those "in the know" as of greater importance than those of any individual connected with the production of a spectacle, opera or play.

In modern times the great producing firms, such as Charles Frohman, Liebler and Company, H. B. Harris and Henry W. Savage, have what is known as "a general stage manager" whose province it is to superintend the productions of all of the stage offerings, which emanate from them. These gentlemen have

been selected only after having survived years of service to the managers named, when their enterprises were fewer in number and less elaborate in character.

Hugh Ford is the general stage manager for Liebler and Company; he has made his impress in a very few years. About six years ago he held this position at Proctor's Theatre in West 23rd Street and also at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, when the latter establishment housed perhaps the last stock company of high calibre, which New York audiences were permitted to admire. Here Mr. Ford demonstrated a marvelous ability, in that despite the fact that two performances were given daily, and plays were changed weekly, the performances were characterized with a smoothness, which would have done credit to a theatre where plays were staged for lengthy runs. Mr. Ford is a prodigious worker: in the last season, that of 1909-10 he staged no less than eighteen new productions for Liebler and Company!

"Willie" Seymour is undoubtedly the dean of stage managers. His career covers almost half a century, during which time he has been associated with practically all of the great stars, such as Booth, Barrett, McCullough and Charlotte Cushman. For a long period he was the stage director of the famous Boston Museum, when that ennobling establishment was under the management of R. M. Field. At present Mr. Seymour is Charles Frohman's most valued aide in the artistic department of his vast enterprises.

He is also the organizer of the many important companies, which Mr. Frohman's annual operations necessitate. The discipline, which he has maintained in the conduct of Mr. Frohman's stage affairs, has been the subject of more than one article in magazines.

Julian Mitchell was an excellent comedian with a lengthy career, long before he became a stage manager. It was at the Weber and Fields Music Hall on Broadway that he first began to demonstrate extraordinary ability as a producer of musical plays and burlesque, and for more than ten years he has been in demand for every moment of his time in productions of this nature. Mr. Mitchell has staged a very large majority of the successes in the Broadway district in recent years. It is said of him that he can get more out of a stage situation, which combines music, action and pretty girls, than any man in the world in his line of endeavor. It was Julian Mitchell who staged the various annual reviews, produced by Florenz Ziegfeld, and the fifth of these under the title of "The Follies of 1910," is now on view at the Jardin de Paris, atop of the New York Theatre. Mr. Mitchell comes from an illustrious family, he is a nephew of Maggie and Mary Mitchell, and is related to a long line of histrionic celebrities. His wife is the dainty dancer, Bessie Clayton, of whom more is written elsewhere in this volume.

Ben Teal—the very mention of whose name suggests stage management with a vengeance—is known all over the world as the strictest, yet the most conscientious of stage directors. He is equally qualified in drama, opera or musical comedy; he has the distinction of being called upon to stage productions abroad, even in London, where stage management is regarded as a supreme art! Mr. Teal has staged practically all of the Klaw and Erlanger productions since that firm became producers, including the mighty "Ben Hur," and this achievement might well have sufficed to maintain his fame for all time. Mr. Teal

has been Charles Frohman's producer for all of his musical pieces. His last work was seen in "The Skylark," which he staged for H. B. Harris, and although this production did not score, because of a weak libretto, the praise, which was extended to Mr. Teal for the superb mise en scene, was such that the impression prevailed that the production would survive despite the shortcoming above noted. Mr. Teal hails from Eugene City, Oregon; he began his career as a child actor, and is a product of the era of "Tom" Maguire. He was brought East by the late Frank B. Murtha, who with John A. Stevens managed the old Windsor Theatre on the Bowery. This was 27 years ago, and since then Mr. Teal has been regarded as the representative general stage director of this country. He has adapted plays and managed the tours of some of them himself, and was also the literary associate of the great Dion Boucicault!

In recent years the great vogue of musical comedy has brought Ned Wayburn to the fore; he has staged within two years three of the most prolific successes of modern times. These productions all took place in the Broadway Theatre, and were respectively: "The Midnight Sons," "The Jolly Bachelors" and "The Summer Widowers." But these by no means constitute a record of the Wayburn achievements, yet his career might well rest with them!



Claude L. Hagen comes in for mention here as the greatest exponent of the technical side of the stage living at this time. Mr. Hagen was born in Chicago, January 21st, 1863. Thirty years ago the writer's attention was attracted to the innovations, which he

evolved at a small variety house in Kansas City, then called The Theatre Comique, and managed by Valentine Love. In those days the variety theatres had stock companies which presented weekly changes of afterpieces and farces; often scenic productions of no mean dimensions were staged.

Hagen remained at the Comique three years, shifting in 1882 to the Coliseum, also in Kansas City. Here he attracted the attention of the Hanlon Brothers, and was engaged as assistant to Robert J. Cutler, a famous machinist and technician of a generation ago. At the end of his first season with the Hanlons he returned to Kansas City and built the famous stage of The Gillis Opera House in that city, remaining there as Master Carpenter until September, 1886, when he began the construction of the Warder Grand Opera House, (a playhouse which attracted widespread attention a quarter of a century ago), and at its completion he became its stage manager.

For the next twelve years Hagen traveled with the most important stars and combinations, and was regarded as the foremost stage machinist of his time. His salary was double that of any other man in his line, and his services were always in active demand. He came to the Fifth Avenue Theatre in 1898 and remained with H. C. Miner several years, also establishing a contracting studio for the building of stage productions. In 1900 Hagen invented and patented the mechanical effects used in the race scene in "Ben Hur." He also took complete charge of the production of this great spectacle for several years, while its tours were confined to the largest cities. In 1902 he produced the race scene of "Ben Hur" at the Drury Lane Theatre in London, and was there accorded the

distinction of being brought before the curtain by Arthur Collins, an honor which has never before been extended to a machinist in the history of the English stage.

In 1903 Thompson and Dundy engaged Hagen as general superintendent of Luna Park, and here he produced the famous "Fighting the Flames," which was the crowning success of their career up to that time. In the latter part of 1908 Mr. Hagen entered into an arrangement with the founders of The New Theatre, to design the most modern stage in the world, superintended its construction and became its technical director. The design of the stage machine alone which permitted scenes to be revolved, moved transversely from footlights to back wall, and raised and lowered in cellar, contained over one million pounds of steel estimated to cost \$250,000.

Limitations of space prevent the recording of the many worthy achievements which this master-mechanic of the theatre has placed to his credit since the opening of The New Theatre. These have been so multitudinous and of such significance that a volume is in preparation to do justice to the subject.



The revival of old-time successes, such as "Caste" and "Jim the Penman," with an effort to conciliate a large number of well known players in one distribution of characters is perhaps the usual spring affair, but there are not lacking indications that in the absence of sufficient good plays to serve as attractions for the constantly increasing theatres, a return will be made in the next theatrical season to many of the clean and sterling plays which were potent in other

years in a more dignified if less propitious period of the theatre. The public response to these spring revivals was never so vigorous as now, and if the cry really is—that there are not enough good plays to go around—then indeed are there many easily cast plays free from complications which will cause activity at the box office. “Our Boys” would prove potent and not old fashioned, if presented with really good actors as it was in London for over three years of consecutive performances. “Led Astray” would move audiences to-day as it did in the days of Charles R. Thorne and Sara Jewett. “Rose Michel” would give Mr. Savage a splendid vehicle for that superb actress, Dorothy Donnelly—The New Theatre might well revive a play or two of this type at any time that a worthy vehicle is wanting for its ennobling policy. Even the plethoric tendency of certain managers to search the Parisian play markets for material of a salacious kind—could find far better results in serving such really clever comedies, as “Les Dominos Roses” (Pink Dominos) and “Bebe” (Baby), either one of which permits of artistic portrayals, in contrast to the inane efforts which the past year has brought forth.

After all not one of the productions which came into being as a result of the temporary success of “The Girl from Rectors,” or “The Queen of the Moulin Rouge” repaid its producers—and one theatre which has sought to establish itself as a house for such unworthy adaptations from the French—has endeavored to call a halt and redeem its prestige by serving a clean, wholesome musical drama—with but four characters to sustain it, but which alone has entitled its manager to consideration in the past two years.

William A. Brady who first attracted attention in

the East by a revival of a potent melodrama—"After Dark" has shown in his production at the Lyric Theatre of an old Madison Square Theatre success—that in his affiliations with the Messrs. Shubert, he is likely to further his ambitions in the line of revivals. Our producers, too, will find that the greatest public response will not always come from the play with the biggest cast—nor will these revivals entail large outlay for scenic investiture.

The writer had hoped that Oscar Hammerstein's policy at the Manhattan Opera House would permit of his assuming the responsibility for at least a portion of a season of a revival of what is called light opera, but if it is to be a Music Hall it is to be hoped that the Messrs. Shubert, who have so many theatres, will experiment with one (the Casino for instance) in this almost deserted field. Mr. Hammerstein has announced that opera comique will be given at his Opera House.

The manager who has the courage to re-establish comic opera on Broadway, especially in the summer will be rewarded with receipts at the box office, far greater than were accorded in the days of McCaull and Aronson. Here, too, opportunity for ideal casts presents itself—the delicious works of Strauss, Milloecker, Genée and others would find a warm welcome from a public satiated with the present day musical comedy exhibit.

Revivals of such works as "The Black Hussar," "Falka," or "The Merry War" would demonstrate a desire on the part of the public for a more dignified presentation than has been offered for their approval in recent years. The inevitable result would be that authors and composers would collaborate for "the real

thing" once more and light opera would hold sway as it did in the best days of the Casino. Who will make the effort?



The apparent decline in the sway of melodrama is not permanent, nor can it be stated that the cheaper style of sensational plays, which not so long ago were the basis of existence for a hundred theatres or more in this country, has passed for all time. These shifts in the public taste have always occurred. The moving picture theatres, together with the vast resources of the prime factors in that line, have contributed principally to the present situation. The managers and stars of melodrama have also succumbed to the lure of the camera man, with the result—a temporary one at most—that the theatres have fallen into the possession of the latter, while the plays which once thrilled East Side audiences, are now condensed into picture scenes. The overwhelming success of "The City" and "Alias Jim Valentine" in which H. B. Warner has received the mantle of his illustrious father, are convincing evidence that melodrama is for all time. Al. H. Woods, about as true a specimen of the "showman" as we have in this land of ours, has not abandoned even the cheaper form of melodrama, though the change in conditions has induced him to invest his capital in a certain type of musical play, such as "The Girl from Rectors." These have yielded temporary profits. Nevertheless, there are indications that Mr. Woods is not without ambition to predominate in broader fields. His direction of the recent artistic career of Miss Blanche Walsh, one of the best actresses of high class melodrama in this country, has been characterized by much worthy effort.

The firm of Stair and Havlin, one of the largest and most successful in the world, achieved the greater portion of its growth in the field of melodrama. This firm has owned, leased or controlled 168 theatres at one time, and, up to two years ago, had continued to expand from a modest beginning less than two decades ago. E. D. Stair is a product of the State of Michigan; John H. Havlin comes from Ohio. Mr. Stair emerged into a theatrical career (like so many others who have grown rich and powerful), from the newspaper office. He started as a printer in a small village (Morenci, Michigan), where he has since erected a memorial auditorium costing \$30,000. Twenty-two years ago, while editing a small paper at Howell, Michigan, he wrote a play called "Little Trixie" for Jessie Bonstelle, who was a popular platform entertainer at that time, and who is now one of the most compelling stock stars we have, though as yet she has not found a vehicle strong enough to perpetuate a stellar career in the Broadway district. He then became the agent of Ward & Vokes with whom he afterward became very prosperous. Mr. Stair also was the manager of a Detroit theatre for Brady and Garwood, and, at the death of the latter, assumed his interest in the house.

John H. Havlin began as a boy around the theatres of Cincinnati, and soon developed executive ability to an extent that placed him in control of theatres in Cincinnati, St. Louis and other cities. He was one of the pioneers of popular priced melodrama—and showed a wisdom in his operations which caused him to become a compelling force in the amusement world before he was affiliated with Mr. Stair. The two came together not so very long ago, and their rise was me-

teoric indeed. Following as they did the incentive created by the success of Klaw and Erlanger, they pursued practically the same methods. It is not necessary to follow them throughout their interesting career, nor to name the myriad of theatres and attractions which they have been enabled to conjure with, though their names did not appear in connection with the majority of them. Mr. Stair's early newspaper training did not permit of his wholly deserting that field, so, when fortune favored him as a showman he purchased the famous "Free Press" in Detroit which he still owns. He also bought the "Journal" in the same city, and for this popular evening newspaper, he recently erected a new home, and is now planning for a magnificent Free Press building, to occupy 100 x 132 feet, in the centre of the city.

While Mr. Stair still retains his vast interests in theatres and companies, he exercises only a supervisory activity over them and devotes himself principally to his newspapers. He has just passed his fiftieth year. It is such careers as that of this man from Michigan, which furnished the writer with foundation for this volume, and there can be no greater incentive provided to the rising generation of amusement endeavorers, than a perusal of such achievements.

"Johnny" Havlin is a man, slightly under medium size, and when he confesses to more than sixty years, he is looked at askance. Most strangers would believe him if he said he was in the thirties. Like Mr. Stair, he has had large interests outside his theatres. He was one of the original trio to start the famous Hagenbeck Annual Show; he is interested in several circus ventures from which he has withheld his name. He also built a million dollar hotel in Cincinnati which

bears his name. Mr. Havlin is noted for his benevolence. His charities know no bounds, and are conducted in a manner which deftly conceals the benefactor from public view.

Thus, melodrama, even though it be passing through a retrograde movement, was the magnet which attracted the public, so that the managers which it has enriched may look on passively until the public taste—which seems to run in cycles—once more calls for a resumption of its sway.



Perhaps the most prolific of modern writers for the stage is Charles Klein, who, a decade ago, was comparatively unknown. He is the author of "The Music Master," "The Lion and the Mouse" and "The third Degree;" the two last have had from three to four companies playing steadily on tour simultaneously, yet it is questionable, if both of these plays combined, will have earned in the end as much as "The Music Master," which Mr. Warfield presents. Mr. Klein has written many other plays, also the librettos for various comic operas, and his name has always been counted upon as a guarantee of success.

Less than five years ago, Eugene Walter was wholly without prestige. He was a familiar figure at the managers' offices, where he was known for his persistency, yet this man was at that period making a herculean effort to interest managers in his play "Paid in Full," which Wagenhals and Kemper had the temerity to produce, and which has already earned a half million of dollars, while the manuscripts of his plays were laying in the shelves of managerial sanctums.

The late Clyde Fitch was unique in that his plays

found a market before reading, and his fame began to justify orders from stars and managers at very large fixed figures, or a royalty of from seven to ten per cent of the gross receipts; some idea may be gathered as to the income of Mr. Fitch, when it is stated that he had been known to present nine plays simultaneously, and the average gross receipts for each of his plays, in a single season, were in excess of \$7,000 a week.

Comic operas and musical comedies earn large incomes for the authors and composers, but here the royalty, which again ranges from seven to ten per cent, is divided between the two. The most successful in this field are Harry B. Smith and Reginald de Koven who wrote "Robin Hood," originally for the Bostonians, and made a fortune as a result. They have collaborated on many other operas and musical plays, that have yielded nearly as much. Both are occasionally found in collaboration with other composers and librettists.

Victor Herbert, however, may be set down as the most prolific composer of light opera in the world to-day, and his earnings are prodigious. He has at this time several of his works on tour and in addition is about to launch a grand opera, which is expected to be representative in its way and the first work of its kind to find a place in one of our modern opera houses. G. Gatti Casazza is the impresario who will produce the Herbert opera; and the present season is regarded as certain to bring it forth.

George Ade has made a fortune in the last few years, both with straight comedies and musical plays. His "College Widow" and "County Chairman" alone have yielded enormous returns; he also has had as

many as six successes playing simultaneously, and his career is at this time in the ascendant.

George Hobart, Gustav Luders and Raymond Hubbell have evolved a plethora of potent musical plays, and all have come forth within a comparatively recent period, and all have registered "hits," any one of which will earn for them as much as our President of these United States is allotted for a year's term of office.

George M. Cohan, the youngest, and by all manner of means the most productive of modern writers, being his own manager in partnership with Mr. Sam Harris, does not have any fixed income for his work, save in a few remote instances. While George was a vaudevillian, and one of the four Cohans, the demand for sketches from his pen was so great, that he wrote over 200 of them, and for each of these twenty-minute affairs he received anywhere from \$250 to \$1,000 each, or a royalty of \$50 a week for all time; but when he became a star on the legitimate stage, he confined his writings to his own use and that of his firm, which to-day are the most extensive and most successful producers of showy musical plays in the world. It may be said for George Cohan that he has never written a failure. In one instance, where he endeavored to broaden his field and evolved the comedy "Popularity," it was found wanting and was cast aside temporarily; but this year we find this same piece, which had failed at Wallack's, a tremendous success at the New York Theatre. By the simple process of rewriting and giving the old work a tenderloinesque flavor and filling the stage with beautiful girls and writing for them a number of entrancing gems, he has not only scored an overwhelming triumph, but he has provided Raymond

Hitchcock with the best starring vehicle of his career at a time when he was sorely in need of such.

Edmund Day who wrote "The Round Up," originally wrote vaudeville sketches, and, next to George Cohan, was the most successful during the period in which he thus figured. He wrote one sketch for himself, called "The Sheriff," and it was from this that "The Round Up" received its impetus.

A unique figure among playwrights is Will S. Cressy whose career is without parallel in theatrical history. Originally from Vermont, where he still lives, when he is able to free himself from the constant demand for his services, he began stage life in a modest way two decades ago, but he made no impress whatever, until in 1899 he "tried out" at Mr. Keith's Vaudeville Theatre in Union Square in a little rural playlet from his own pen. His sole support was Mrs. Cressy, known as Blanche Dayne, and under the team name of Cressy and Dayne, they have broken more records and achieved more successes, than ever was recorded in the history of the stage to one individual or combination of individuals. In ten years Cressy and Dayne have appeared about 75 per cent of the time in Mr. Keith's own theatres; they were the first to be retained for two weeks in cities of ordinary size, and they have been known to play an entire season in as few as six of Mr. Keith's theatres. It has not been uncommon for them to play engagements of four weeks consecutively in any theatre in which they were booked. They have never had an idle week; they have never played an "opposition house." Their salary has increased yearly, until to-day it is about four times as large as when they began. But it is as a writer of sketches for others, that Mr. Cressy has

achieved his greatest potency, and of these he has written so many, that one can best convey the result with the statement that in one season thirty Cressy playlets or sketches were being presented simultaneously. A decade ago he came modestly into the metropolis, unknown, and with difficulty sought a hearing; to-day he is worth a half million of dollars, while his portrayals are of the same truthful artistic character, which first attracted the managerial eye in his direction.



The arrival of the woman playwright was not reached without a struggle, and it is only within the last few years that her potency has been clearly established and recognized.

Miss Martha Morton, now Mrs. Conheim, was perhaps the pioneer, and she surely has maintained her position without any apparent retrograde movement. It was with the play, "The Merchant," that she came into prominence, and its production was a result of the prize contest, indulged in by the "New York World." Since then Miss Morton has scored a multitude of successes, and all of her efforts have been presented by the foremost managers. Miss Morton is an English woman, and her brother, Michael Morton, who came to America as a boy and began as an amateur actor, afterwards returned to his native country, and there became one of the most prolific and prominent playwrights of his time.

Some of the greatest financial and artistic successes of the present season in New York are the result of woman's effort. "Seven Days," which started an era of farce is the work of Mary Roberts Rinehart, in

collaboration with Mr. Avery Hopwood; and it will be interesting to observe the progress of the former brilliant writer, now that her fame has been established.

"The Lottery Man," which brought The Bijou Theatre out of a veritable succession of despondency and failures, is the brilliant work of Rida Johnson Young, but in this instance success was not so surprising, for the lady had long been attracting the attention of managers and the press by reason of her ability in other directions.

Anne Crawford Flexner is still another of her sex to score in New York this season a decidedly substantial success, and her comedy, "A Lucky Star," has provided that effervescent comedian, William Collier, with undoubtedly the best vehicle of his long career.

It is a remarkable fact that the three most potent attractions in Metropolitan theatres this season were of the farcial character, and all are the works of brilliant woman writers whose future achievements are likely to be on a still greater scale than heretofore.

The woman playwright however is not of this year's birth by any means. Mrs. Sydney Drew has written several successful plays, not always credited to her own name; she has also evolved a number of one-act plays for vaudeville.

The one-act play has often been found to be more profitable to a writer than the one which constitutes an entire evening's entertainment. Miss Grace Griswold who wrote "Billy's First Love" for Miss Valerie Bergere, more than a decade ago, has found that vehicle profitable to this day; and although Miss Griswold has written several other successful plays and sketches, this one effort has sufficed to sustain her reputation and to provide perhaps larger royalties than

are unusually accorded a playwright for one successful production of any nature.

Rachel Crothers who wrote "Three of Us" and was accorded a general success with it under circumstances far from favorable, is found again, this season, adding more than her share to the glories of her sex by providing Miss Mary Mannering with a successful play, when she most needed it, in "A Man's World," which, at the Comedy Theatre, has shown vital sustaining qualities.

This has been, indeed, a remarkable year for the woman playwright.



There can be no more powerful or worthy incentive provided for the struggling playwright in this era of expansion, than the various contests which some of our enterprising managers, with the aid of the public press, have recently brought forward. It is recalled that since Martha Morton became famous with her first play, "The Merchant," which was brought to light through the New York World's contest, that every successive effort in this direction has been followed with the desired results. The "New York Herald," years ago, discovered the best one act comedy of that day in "Chums" through a contest.

Henry B. Harris however has evolved a method which can be productive only of far reaching results; he has awarded prizes to six aspiring writers for a scenario, and to one of these, Mrs. Martha F. Bel-linger, a prize of \$500 was granted with an assurance that the scenario would be worked out, and the play produced, while encouragement is bestowed on five others, and five prizes of \$100 each also allotted. Noth-

ing is more certain than that Mr. Harris's generous plan will not only avail these and others who received favorable mention, but the plan itself is one that will be emulated, and thus a plethora of good material for the stage must of necessity come to the surface.

Martin Beck, whose extraordinary rise in the last few years is discussed elsewhere in this volume, has also shown a fine discernment and much public spirit in awarding prizes and guaranteeing production, during the Actors' Fund Fair, of a number of one-act playlets, a procedure which can only serve to give a great stimulus to vaudeville, the field in which Mr. Beck labors so intelligently. His encouragement to the unknown though ambitious writer will not end with this one opportunity; for the innovations which the vaudeville magnate has established on his vast Orpheum Circuit lead one to assume that, as far as vaudeville is concerned, the uplift so necessary and desirable, will go on until vaudeville itself will become a veritable mecca for budding genius. Mr. Beck has in mind the erection of a large building, where every phase of artistic creation will be encouraged and housed. The plans call for departments devoted to construction, each presided over by a master in his particular line; thus, playlets, sketches, pantomimes, ballets, operettas and every type of musical and dramatic vehicle in abbreviated form will be built, rehearsed and even staged within its walls. One of the most vital features of this progressive undertaking is the inclusion of a bijou theatre, where what is now called "the try out" will become a reality; at a moment's notice the allied managers and agents with whom Mr. Beck is affiliated, can be called together to

pass upon the merits of the various productions as they mature.

Undoubtedly the most important result yet achieved from a contest is that won by Mrs. Lionel S. Marks, the wife of a Harvard professor, and known by her pen name, Josephine Preston Peabody. That an American should have seized the honor of having her play, "The Piper," accepted for presentation at the Shakespeare Theatre at Stratford-on-Avon, is far more significant than the fact that she was also awarded a prize of \$1,500. Mrs. Marks is, primarily, a poet; and the work from her pen, which was thus honored, is in blank verse, her natural method of self-expression. It is gratifying that this recognition of an American girl should come from such a source, and that the authoress has been able to proceed to Stratford to attend the preparations for the production of this child of her brain at the endowed Shakespeare Theatre. Serious thinkers in the field of the theatre have made much of this achievement, and well they may, for if reports be true, Mrs. Marks has other classical works, which will now easily find an outlet. Is it not recalled that two prolific writers of two distinct generations, Bartley Campbell and Eugene Walter, had accumulated meritorious plays galore, all of which had lain dormant until in each instance the playwright had scored his first triumph; Mr. Campbell with "The Galley Slave" and Mr. Walter with "Paid in Full"?

What a transformation has it been for the American playwright within the last very few years! It is not so long ago that a successful production of other than foreign works was acclaimed as a signal event, and even these rare aves were invariably farces, such as

"The Gilded Age," "The Mighty Dollar" and "Our Boarding House." A really serious play or comedy of intrinsic merit was regarded as a revelation; managers were indifferent. Even Mr. Daly and Mr. Palmer, though they employed men of ability in America for adaptations, were dead to the entreaties of original writers!

The transformation came with the era of the producer, and a vital figure is he! Is he appreciated by the powerful interests who, through the accident of controlling the bookings of many theatres, are dignified by the name of syndicates? Nevertheless, it is the producer that makes theatrical history, and the operations of these gentlemen at this time are nothing short of colossal.

George Tyler, of Liebler & Co., staged eighteen new productions, most all by American authors, during the past year; some of which were permitted to go into oblivion, because Mr. Tyler's firm, Liebler & Co., are without a single theatre of their own. Chicago has been Mr. Tyler's producing centre for several years, and if one may judge by what he has accomplished in that city, it is greatly to be deplored that more metropolitan theatres have not been available for him. There is every indication, however, that the enormous operations, which Liebler & Co., are planning ahead, will result in the erection of one or more Liebler Theatres in the immediate future.

William A. Brady produces more works of American writers, and scores more successes than his position as to theatres would seemingly justify, but then Mr. Brady's first theatre of his own is on the way of completion.

Henry W. Savage, who produces operas, operettas, musical plays, comedies and farces, has one theatre under his own direction, and that (The Garden Theatre), is fast becoming out of the beaten track. Mr. Savage is a shrewd and experienced real estate specialist, hence, it is presumed, that he will acquire more theatres. The Garden Theatre has been sublet to Al H. Woods.

Charles Dillingham has one New York theatre, The Globe, and Daniel V. Arthur, who, up to now, has not been an extensive producer, is to have a house of his own, and, as a result, will increase the number of his productions and add to his stars.

Ray Comstock and Morris Gest are extensive producers, principally in the field of musical comedy; Mr. Comstock has one theatre in New York, The Comedy, and several in other cities.

George Cohan and Samuel Harris produce successes only; there is no instance where any production they have made has not finally endured. Mr. Cohan evidently convinces himself of the intrinsic merit of the works he evolves, and if they are not accepted in their original form, they are not cast aside, but, as instanced by "Popularity," which was revamped into "The Man Who Owns Broadway," and became one of the striking successes of the past season on Broadway, are recast.

Cohan and Harris have three theatres in New York, one about to be dedicated; they also are well provided for in Chicago, and have large vested interests in theatres in other cities.

Henry B. Harris, with the exception of the past season, has been very fortunate with his productions, and

undoubtedly three such successes as "The Lion and the Mouse," "The Third Degree" and "The Traveling Salesman," not to speak of "The Chorus Lady," will offset even such a disastrous year as has characterized this manager's efforts in 1909-1910. But here we have a real manager who is not likely to reduce his theatrical commitments, because of the many failures recorded the past year. Some of these failures were due, too, to the miscasting of the chief roles, while in the case of Mr. Harris' first effort in musical comedy the writer is not of the opinion that a final failure will be recorded.

"The Skylark" is more entitled to figure in the category of comic operas, than musical comedy, and if this fact is realized, and the libretto strengthened, the enormous outlay and the gorgeous setting, which this liberal manager has bestowed upon it, will have been justified. Mr. Harris has two theatres in New York, but the vast holdings of his father, William Harris, are of course available to him, so that as a producer the younger Harris is better off than most of his colleagues.

The Messrs. Shubert are extensive producers and evolve a great number of permanent successes; they have a dozen or more theatres in New York to which they are constantly adding, besides the superb Hippodrome where they have achieved a tremendous success, which will be greatly emphasized, when they are enabled (as now seems likely), to transfer their gigantic offerings to other cities. Hippodromes are now being planned for Boston, Philadelphia and Chicago, thus an affiliation with these will greatly facilitate the metropolitan institution. Lee Shubert is also the business manager of the New Theatre, an association,

which will avail him materially as that great undertaking matures to its final aims.

The various changes which the past year has brought to the two larger booking syndicates (those of Frohman, Klaw and Erlanger and the Shuberts being referred to), have no very great significance; for in this great era of progress and enlargement, such are to be expected. If Mr. Brady and Mr. Arthur swing their attractions over to the Shubert side, as did Liebler & Co. a year before, it is but the natural sequence of supply and demand. The day has long since passed, when the vast amusement enterprises of these United States could be vested in one interest; many more such changes should be announced before these pages reach their readers; but the separation of Julius Cahn and his chain of New England and Eastern theatres from the so-called theatrical syndicate's rule, is perhaps the first real break in the ranks of the latter, and it is marvelous that so vast an amalgamation as has been maintained by Messrs. Frohman, Klaw and Erlanger, could remain so long intact!

Mr. Cahn began to build up his present business more than twenty years ago; he was the assistant of Charles Frohman when that manager had inaugurated a booking agency in partnership with William W. Randall (who is now associated with the Messrs. Shubert). During all this period Mr. Cahn has attended to Mr. Frohman's bookings, and as the enterprises of the latter expanded, the influence and prestige of his booking assistant became more evident. Soon the field opened itself for Mr. Cahn to represent various managers of theatres in New England, to which Mr. Charles Frohman offered no objection; thus, the Cahn agency was created and grew to tremendous propor-

tions, while its head became wealthy and powerful, owing undoubtedly to the forbearance of his generous employer, Charles Frohman.

The writer is not desirous of taking sides in these matters, yet a purpose of this recital is to convey to the reader a truthful story of the progress which has obtained in the amusement field, and it is but fair that Mr. Frohman's attitude toward Mr. Cahn be portrayed, though it is not assumed that the latter may not have been justified, because of recent events, to proceed as he has.

The future alone can determine the wisdom of the move, and as Mr. Frohman as is his wont, has been silent, it is unnecessary to comment further. Mr. Cahn owns several theatres in the larger cities of New England, and is the lessee of several more, while he is the accredited booking representative of nearly 200 theatres in the smaller cities; but to what extent his latest move will be approved or challenged by this clientelae, is a matter which time alone can develop.

CHAPTER X

THE LYCEUM BUREAU—THE SOCIETY AND CLUB BUREAU—THE REMARKABLE CONTRAST IN SALARIES, AS COMPARED WITH OTHER DAYS—THE SHOWMANSHIP OF WILLIAM MORRIS, HIS EXCELLENT STAFF—THE BUSINESS WOMAN IN THEATREDOM—THE ACTOR AS A BUSINESS MAN—THE CONCERT FIELD.

The operations of the Lyceum Bureau are worthy of being recorded.

Forty years ago G. H. Hathaway, James Redpath and Major J. B. Pond were the most prominent, and the American tours of such eminent lecturers and readers, as Charles Dickens, Henry M. Stanley, Mrs. Scott-Siddons, Charlotte Cushman and Mr. Bellevue were under their direction. Mr. Redpath devoted a lengthy business career solely to this field, and Major Pond, up to the time of his demise, expanded his operations until he became the leading figure in his peculiar, though important, work. Mr. Hathaway is still a part of the Redpath Bureau but is no longer an active worker. Both the Pond and Redpath Bureaus are perpetuated to this day, and are still the predominating factors.

The Redpath concern, a year ago, absorbed the Slayton Lyceum Bureau of Chicago, which Henry L. Slayton established in 1874, and for thirty-five years he labored successfully and incessantly to build up a clientele, which gave him absolute control in the West in his line. He married Mina Gregory, a talented

reader in 1874, and it was in the effort to further her career that he embarked into the lyceum field. His son, Wendell P. Slayton, joined him in 1893 and became the treasurer of the vast concern, while Charles Wagner, a young and vigorous worker who is now prominent in the musical or concert field, was active in Mr. Slayton's behalf in the last ten years of his labors. Mr. Wagner brings Kocian to America the coming season for a concert tour.

Mr. Slayton's most prolific attraction has been the Honorable William Jennings Bryan, whose vogue as a public lecturer from a box office point of view, is without parallel. Were the receipts for the period during which he was conspicuous recorded, their recital would amaze even our grand opera stars.

Mr. Slayton passed away at his home in St. Petersburg, Florida, in May, 1910.

The Civic Forum Lecture Bureau is of recent creation, but its activity has brought it into prominence all over the country. This bureau controls the public appearances of the most distinguished political and economic speakers. The courses, which have been established through its efforts in the various cities have shown a certain kind of public spirit in accord with progress, and modern as well as uplifting methods are clearly in evidence. The Civic Forum Lecture Bureau directs the public appearances of Commodore Peary, and the recent engagement of Ellen Terry for Shakespearean readings encourages one to presume that the institution will delve deeper into the strictly artistic realm for material for its future operations.

In 1879 James Phipps started the first bureau which had for its purpose the supplying of talent of a histrionic order to clubs, societies, and to cater to the re-

quirements of our wealthy and social residents who were wont to entertain their guests with celebrities of the stage. Mr. Phipps' methods have remained the same to this day, and he is to be regarded as the pioneer in his line. His first partner was James S. Burdett, the humorist; Samuel Edwards, the well-known comedian, was also a partner of Mr. Phipps, who, a few years after he had started, took for an associate James Gottschalk (not the present member of the firm of Gottschalk and Alpuente), and the firm name of Phipps and Gottschalk, was launched. Mr. Phipps is without a partner at this time, and has not had one in recent years.

J. H. Alpuente, who is perhaps the most successful caterer in the club and society bureau field, was publishing a programme at Chickering Hall, when he became acquainted with James Phipps, and the firm of Phipps and Alpuente was established. This firm prospered for many years, and though now, separated, both have conducted their respective bureaus with a dignity and a systemized policy of rectitude that might well be emulated by other agencies and booking concerns. These gentlemen conduct their business on veritable banking lines, and the books which they have preserved for a generation, show a clerical method wholly lacking in the amusement business generally. Mr. Alpuente has paid some record prices to the famous stars of vaudeville in recent years for an appearance in the homes of members of the so-called "400," and the manner in which he personally presides over these functions, easily accounts for his survival. He is married to Miss Aurie Dagwell, herself one of vaudeville's most popular idols, and his offices on East 20th Street are regarded as a model for others to emulate.

Others prominent in this line are Messrs. Wade and Foster, both of whom have been active for many years, and they are also highly regarded in the business as well as the artistic world.

Mr. Alpuente was undoubtedly the first to devote his energies to the placing of the better class of vaudeville stars in the homes of the wealthy, and he once converted Sherry's ballroom into a vast circus arena, erecting a 60-foot round top tent. He also booked the full programme, given on the Madison Square Roof Garden during the first few years of its existence, and it was through this service that he came to establish the large and intimate business relations he to-day holds in the lyceum and club field.

As an illustration of the significant changes which time will mark, it may be stated here that Elsie Janis appeared at an entertainment booked by Alpuente for \$20, just three months before that popular artiste began to star in "The Vanderbilt Cup," and the following year demanded \$1,000 for a similar appearance.

Lew Dockstader, about the same time, was refused \$250 on the Madison Square Roof Garden for a week, and was paid \$75 to appear at clubs. To-day \$2,000 is willingly paid him in vaudeville, while he would not think of entertaining the guests of the Goulds or Vanderbilts, after a usual performance, unless his fee was at least \$500.

While on the subject of salaries, the writer is tempted to enlarge in view of the many abnormal features which present themselves by way of comparison.

Vesta Victoria had a weekly honorarium of \$250 not so very long ago, and she was at least as good then as she is to-day, when \$2,500 is found in her pay envelope at the end of a week's engagement.

Less than six years ago, \$150 looked large to Eva Tanguay, and it was necessary for her to present herself at the various agencies daily, and often in vain, in order to secure this figure for a week. To-day her salary varies from \$1,500 to \$2,500 a week, according to the number of performances, and the nature of the engagement!

Alice Lloyd came over here two years ago at a salary of \$200, and before her first season ended, \$1,500 was handed to her every Saturday or Sunday night as a result of the sensational "hit" she recorded.

David Warfield appeared at Keith's Union Square Theatre a decade ago for \$100 weekly, and Louis Mann was satisfied with \$75! To-day Warfield earns fifty times as much, and Mann has refused \$2,000 from the very same management.

Irene Franklin who to-day requires four figures to illustrate her weekly stipend, was wont to please audiences at Tony Pastor's quite as much as she does to-day at a salary of \$75 for the same period.

Gertrude Hoffmann, over whom two important managerial concerns have been at litigation for the priority of her services at the amazing weekly sum of \$3,500, was happy to receive, less than four years ago, one-tenth of that amount.

Joe Welch, whose portrayal of the East Side Hebrew is regarded as the most artistic achievement of recent years, was "closed" at Gilmore's Auditorium in Philadelphia ten years ago, because Mr. Gilmore did not think he was worth the \$40 which he contracted to pay him for a week. Mr. Welch was just as clever in those days as he is now, when \$1,000 is the price generally paid him.

Victor Moore, who is now an accepted favorite, play-

ing in the best theatres booked by Klaw and Erlanger, a few years ago was forced to try out a playlet in several theatres, and finally found vogue at a salary of \$125 a week, out of which he paid his co-star, Miss Julia Blanc, and all of the other expenses, which entail under such circumstances.

Rose Stahl, for whom James Forbes wrote "The Chorus Lady," passed, five years ago, through many humiliating experiences in an effort to secure a hearing for the clever one-act playlet, which finally was produced one Sunday evening at Proctor's 23d Street Theatre, with the after-result that managers tumbled over each other to enlist her services at \$350 a week. To-day \$2,500 would be gladly paid for the same vehicle and star.

The Four Cohans, consisting of the effervescent George, his sister Josephine, and their parents, Jerry and Helen, ten years ago were paid \$300 a week, though the extraordinary talent of the family was just as evident as it is to-day, and in order to show the peculiarity of the managerial temperament, I have only to observe that J. J. Murdock, then the manager of the Masonic Temple Roof Garden in Chicago, paid them \$3,000 for a single week in a contest, advertised extensively to bring forth the most popular "turn" in America for one week at the figure named. One can but conjecture as to the honorarium which would be allotted to this quartette at this time, were they to elect to make an excursion into the vaudeville field, where once they held sway so profitably.

Harry Lauder, however, being of recent fame, was accorded \$2,500 a week on his very first visit, and at each successive return to America his figure has climbed, until, counting the amount which William

Morris must pay to effect his release from European engagements, the clever Scot stands the independent vaudeville magnate at least \$5,000 a week, which is unquestionably the highest salary ever paid to a vaudeville artist.

Yet William Morris has said that Lauder is the cheapest attraction he ever booked, and he keeps on increasing his allotment at each annual visit.

It does not seem possible that such a figure can be paid, but the facts prove that Morris has survived in his battle for independence through his control of this one man's valuable services. Twice has Lauder saved the day for the irrepressible Morris, though it must be admitted that the business acumen displayed by the latter in the direction of the Lauder itinerary, has contributed more than its share to the final result. William Morris is perhaps the most capable showman in America to-day. A generation provides three or four instances of extraordinary tact in the conduct of theatrical management; first came Barnum, then J. H. Haverly, then came the late S. S. Shubert, and lastly William Morris. The latter is still in the sunny side of his thirties, and now that he has undoubtedly demonstrated his supremacy in the herculean task which he undertook, his future achievements can only be of a colossal order.

Two years ago, when Morris woke up one morning to find that every theatre for which he held a booking franchise, had gone over to the interests whom he had set out to oppose, and when he also discovered that the theatres of both the vast booking syndicates were closed to vaudeville endeavor, and himself bereft also of an annual income of more than \$50,000, he began the seemingly absurd effort of creating an independent

circuit of theatres. His personal fortune, said at the time to have been about \$100,000, was instantly devoted to his new policy, and he rallied about him one or two gentlemen whom he had impressed with the sincerity of his purpose.

The first move was to secure the American Theatre on West 42d Street, and Morris said at the time to the writer: "One theatre is opposition! I have been a menace to monopolists before, when I had only the Avenue Theatre in Detroit; hence, now that I have leased a New York theatre, I may count upon it that there will always be a William Morris theatre playing independent vaudeville!"

The rest is history. Each year his circuit has grown, and with the opening of the season of 1910-11, Morris theatres in the great Northwest and on the Pacific coast will come into being. In this section Mr. Walter Hoff-Seely, who is in control of the Morris Western interests, has loomed up as a tremendous factor. Mr. Seely was formerly a newspaper man, and like so many other journalists who have come into the field of the theatre, he has shown himself to be uncommonly well adapted to the demands made on his services. Though Mr. Seely has been operating less than a year in Mr. Morris' behalf, he already has seen four new theatres rise, and, by the time these pages are read, it is expected that a total of seven palatial theatres, devoted solely to the William Morris type of vaudeville, will be ready for business, west of Chicago.

The sagacity of Mr. Morris in the selection of his business staff and associates has been repeatedly demonstrated. Mr. George Leventrit, whose loyalty and energy have known no bounds, has been perhaps the greatest factor in the survival of the independent cir-

cuit outside William Morris himself; but it was in the selection of Edward L. Bloom as his general manager, at a period in his affairs, which, if not crucial, was at least interesting, that William Morris did himself proud; for here he accomplished a feat which would greatly reduce the overwhelming responsibilities entailed upon himself, and permit him to absent himself abroad and about this country in the interests of his growing enterprises. Mr. Leventrit died in June, 1910.

Bloom comes from Cincinnati, a city that has turned out a number of brilliant theatrical managers, and he distinguished himself in olden times by taking on some so-called "hard propositions." It was Bloom who once assumed the management of Ada Gray, an old time actress, who had passed through a career of vicissitudes which would require a little volume to recite, and despite the jocular predictions of his friends he started out to make Miss Gray a potent magnet with no more or less of a vehicle than the book play "East Lynne." The printing which Bloom devised was simply astounding, and the methods he used in the exploitation of this star and play, were of the circus order. Suffice to state, the results, financially, were phenomenal, and others began to emulate his methods as well as his idea of reviving "East Lynne." Bloom was the valued manager of the late Alexander Hermann, himself one of the greatest showmen that ever lived; while he was with the great magician, his tours yielded tremendous profits, though much of these were sunk in the theatre known as the "Morgue" (and once actually called the "Jonah" theatre), on Broadway, between 28th and 29th Streets.

In Chicago Mr. Morris is represented in his booking offices by James C. Matthews who was sent there

three years ago to create a field for Morris vaudeville in that district, and he surely has accomplished this.

Among Mr. Morris' resident managers in the various cities, where he has theatres of his own, is William T. Grover, a son of Leonard Grover, and himself one of the oldest and most experienced business men known to the theatrical world. Grover has been sent from one house to another, with a view of establishing each with a policy which he has found to be effective, and in no instance has the result failed to record a final success.

Joseph F. Vion is another of Morris' local managers; he undertook the difficult task of conducting the New Orleans end of the Morris enterprises, at a time when the necessities of the case required that artists should jump all over the country, in order to get in and out of New Orleans in time for the conservation of other engagements. Vion is an old-time agent, and was once Weber and Fields' most trusted lieutenant; he has an enviable reputation for honesty, and this is always worth recording. He has accumulated a snug little fortune, as a result of real estate speculation. Vion originally embarked into this field through seeking a home for himself and family. He has since sold similar residences and farms to the industrious and thrifty members of the vaudeville profession who, more than any other class of theatrical endeavorers, have something to show for their era of prosperity.

Elmer Rogers was another Morris manager, the first in fact to give aid to the latter. He had been one of Mr. Keith's most valued assistants, but was tempted to transfer his efforts to the Morris venture at a salary, said at the time, to be \$10,000 a year.

The business woman in amusement endeavor has been a conspicuous quantity and a potent quality throughout this generation. In the 60's and 70's many of our most important theatres had been under woman's rule, and the illustrious names of Mrs. John Drew, Mrs. F. B. Conway, Harriet Holman, Caroline Richings Bernard, Rose Leland and others have been duly preserved by historians of the theatre of their day. Mrs. Morrison in Toronto, and Fanny Marsh in Montreal and Portland, maintained superb stock companies until their long and honorable careers were brought to a close.

In modern times we still have woman as a factor, and two theatres at least in New York are named after their projectors of the gentler sex. Miss Maxine Elliott, however, has shown a discernment in the conduct of her business affairs, which makes it easy to prophesy that her future career will be one of expansion, and her beautiful theatre on West 39th Street has already housed, within its first year of operation, the most sterling dramatic triumph of a strenuous theatrical season in Forbes Robertson's epochal triumph—"The Passing of the Third Floor Back." Miss Elliott herself at Daly's Theatre has scored heavily in Frank Stayton's play, "The Inferior Sex," and this author is now busily engaged in preparing a successor for the beautiful Maxine, whose sway never was so potent as now.

In the heyday of the Gilbert and Sullivan opera, when the late R. Doyle Carte was wont to pursue the pirate vigorously, it was a woman who rendered him the most efficient service. Helen Lenoir was the name of the English impresario's most trusted aid, and well

is she remembered in America for her business qualities, as well as for her amazing energy.

Mrs. F. H. Snyder, who is conceded to be the most successful woman manager in America, lives in St. Paul. She was born in Wisconsin, and is very loyal to the musical interests of the Middle West—interests which she has made her special care. The wife of a wealthy man, and mistress of one of the most beautiful homes in the Twin Cities, Mrs. Snyder is free to choose her way of life. Therefore it is by choice that she has become an impresario. Energetic, forceful, a cheerful loser and an experienced winner in the managerial game, she has so far stamped her personality upon the ethics of concert management in the Northwest that she has become a model for others to follow. The secret of her almost uniform success is not due to systematic rejection of the unpopular attraction, for she has taken artists who had more of merit than of popularity and succeeded in getting appreciative audiences for them. She has that great and desirable asset of the manager—magnetism. People believe in the cause she espouses. Then, too, she is that rarest of managers, the musician who has a gift for business. As a young girl she went to Florence, Italy, to develop a dramatic soprano voice of exceptional power and beauty. Her temperament is musical, and she became a favorite pupil of Vaninni, the distinguished Italian master of singing. Vaninni dedicated some of his compositions to her—she was then Nettie Fuller—and Carl Bohm and other song writers dedicated music to the gifted young soprano. Returning to America and St. Paul, she taught and sang until her marriage put an end to her plans to become an opera singer. Mrs. Snyder has had studios in Sioux City, Iowa; Mankato, Minn., and

St. Paul. She still maintains her studio in the Frederic Hotel, St. Paul, and teaches favored pupils two days a week. But most of her time is spent at "The Crossroads," Mr. and Mrs. Snyder's country home midway between St. Paul and Minneapolis, where an Italian garden forms a charming setting for a charming home.

During the summer months the art of music is not permitted to languish in the Twin Cities, for there is a music salon at "The Crossroads" large enough to accommodate two or three hundred guests, and once or twice a week all summer some artist seeking the cool airs about Lake Minnetonka or White Bear is heard there, or Eastern managers passing through pause long enough to hear some promising western voice.

Last winter Mrs. Snyder was in Italy the greater part of the season, studying, teaching and singing, but she limits her visits abroad to a few months only, in order to keep the operatic bee buzzing in her home city. She managed one of the most successful seasons of opera ever given outside New York last April. The big new Auditorium in St. Paul was sold out for every performance, and the Metropolitan company has seldom experienced such a brilliantly successful season on any of its tours. The audiences were made up from a very large Northwest territory, Winnipeg, and many of the North and South Dakota, Montana, Nebraska, Iowa and Wisconsin cities being represented, besides all the larger Minnesota towns. Mrs. Snyder has managed concerts by Mme. Schumann-Heink, Paderewski, Gabrilowitsch, and many other leading artists. Her first successes were made in concerts, and her great popularity is largely due to the faith she has invariably kept with the public.

For the first two years of the St. Paul Symphony

Orchestra's existence she was its manager, working without salary, and appearing at the same time in the list of guarantors. She is still a guarantor and warm supporter of the orchestra's plans, as she is of every plan that will swell the tide of musical interest in the Northwest.

In Washington, D. C., there has been for nearly two decades one vaudeville theatre, and no attempt to compete with this establishment, known as Chase's Theatre, has ever endured for any length of time; in fact, Washington is the only city of anything like its size, where this unique condition prevails. The business at Chase's Theatre is so large that its owner, P. B. Chase, has resisted all temptation to expand into other cities, though in the earlier portion of his regime he did experiment in Baltimore at the Lyceum Theatre, but he found conditions far different in the Monumental City. This recital is interesting only because of the fact that Mr. Chase's success is greatly due, very greatly, to the efforts of his associate manageress, Miss Winnifred De Witt. This lady was in the early 90's one of the first and one of the best of the emulators of La Loie Fuller. She was known in those days as "Solaret," under which name she commanded a large salary and constant bookings. In some manner she came to appear in her Terpsichorean specialty in Mr. Chase's theatre, and she ultimately remained there as its guiding spirit. The perfection of system and the general discipline, which characterizes the conduct of this model theatre, is at all times credited to its feminine manager, and one hears praise galore meted out to Miss De Witt by all who have occasion to refer to Washington's famous vaudeville resort.

When the Messrs. Sire were Napoleons of the thea-

tre, more than a decade ago, they maintained, besides the Bijou Theatre, which they still control and manage, the New York Theatre and the Casino. Their stenographer at the New York Theatre was Miss Jenie Jacobs who has made her impress in the vaudeville world through sheer energy and perseverance. Miss Jacobs came in contact with vaudeville artists by reason of the roof garden shows, which the Messrs. Sire presented, and she has been a factor ever since, having made several ocean trips abroad and conducting an agency in her name on both sides of the Atlantic. Miss Jacobs has a large clientage here and in Europe, and is at present affiliated with that giant of vaudeville agents, P. J. Casey, and the genial Hibernian's mastodonic appetite is said to be due to the serenity of mind, which Miss Jacobs' care of his business interests permits.

The late Mrs. Fernandez was a striking illustration of woman's adaptability to the conduct of theatrical business, and she built up what became the leading dramatic agency in this country from a modest though earnest beginning. Mrs. Fernandez's success was due to a determined policy, and to persistent application to the one purpose of her business life. Her death in 1909 was a great shock to the entire profession, and her loss will be hard indeed to repair, though she is succeeded by her beautiful daughter. No doubt this will be an instance where "blood will tell." Miss Bijou Fernandez (now Mrs. W. L. Abingdon) has abandoned her artistic career to devote herself exclusively to the business which her beloved mother evolved.

Elizabeth Marbury has been for more than twenty-five years the representative "play broker" of this

country, and her prestige in Europe is, if anything, even greater than here. At no time has Miss Marbury been in danger of a serious competitor from either sex; she is the accredited agent of the world's greatest playwrights, and her business procedure has often brought her into the limelight in matters of the greatest international importance. Miss Marbury's authority, too, is unquestioned, and her advice is sought eagerly by the most important interests, while her judgment in the matter of plays is universally regarded everywhere. More than once this enterprising woman has shown discernment, from which she has profited hugely. Her annual income is said to be enormous, while her reputation for commercial rectitude among authors and managers is such that she rarely is required to give more than her word in a business transaction.

Alice Kauser, like Miss Marbury, has prospered in a similar field for an almost equal period, and her offices are among the busiest in the Broadway district. Miss Kauser's international business with playwrights and managers is of enormous proportions, and her dealings with stock companies throughout the country are on a very large scale; in fact, it is greatly due to Miss Kauser that the superior kind of plays now available to this class of organization, has been released.

Mrs. H. C. De Mille, whose offices in the Astor Theatre Building are among the largest in the city, undoubtedly found her incentive for entering the field of play bureaus in the large and notable list of plays, which her illustrious husband, the late Henry C. De Mille bequeathed to her; and to these must be added the very successful works of her two sons, Henry C.

Jr. and William, both of whom have inherited the genius of their father, though the younger De Milles have the great natural advantage of laboring in an era wherein the native playwright is accorded more consideration from the manager and star, and infinitely more honorarium. Mrs. De Mille has scored several "scoops" in recent years, and it is she who placed such noteworthy successes as "The Lion and the Mouse," "Strongheart" and "Seven Days."

Miss Anna Marble comes in for mention here because of her ability as a publicity promoter, and it is within the province of this volume to include such achievements, the purpose being to denote the manner in which woman has competed with her male opponent, and the grace and dignity with which she has emerged from the struggle.



The actor as a business man has always been recorded as impossible, yet an investigator will find the statement unjust as well as in direct contrast with facts.

The actor-manager has been plentiful as far back as memory can recall, John E. Owens, Edwin Booth, J. K. Emmett, John McCullough, Ben de Bar, J. H. McVicker, John W. Norton, John Sleeper Clarke, Frank W. Sanger and many others who have passed away, amassed fortunes not only in the conduct of their own business affairs, but also in the management of theatres and attractions in which others were far more conspicuous than themselves.

Richard Mansfield's greatest triumphs were recorded after he had assumed the responsibility and active direction of his own artistic efforts. He also

was interested, financially, in other theatrical enterprises, which, though the incentive was to further some artistic evolution were profitably maintained.

Joseph Murphy became one of the wealthiest actors in America, as a result of the shrewdness he displayed in the conduct of his tours, which, while supposedly under the guidance of others, were solely under his own dictation, even where an interest in the profits was shared by the manager, figuring as such.

Practically all of the stars of this day are either their own managers, or else they are found in partnership with their business head, and this condition prevails greatly with the women stars. All of Mr. Frohman's stars are interested in the profits arising from their various attractions. The same state of affairs exists with the Shubert stars, while the number who are solely responsible for the conduct of their business and who pay salaries to their business staff, is legion.

Henry Miller rose to his present position through the ability he displayed as a manager, and it was in the period of his regime at the Princess Theatre that he evolved the two great successes which have since availed him, viz.: "Zira" and "The Great Divide."

Nat Goodwin has been his own manager during the most prosperous portion of his career, and Maxine Elliott, once Mrs. Goodwin, is a striking illustration, independent of her sex, of the business acumen of the player; she is likely to reach out to the proportions of a magnate.

"Gus" Pitou was an actor originally; H. C. Wyatt, the dean of Californian managers, emanated from the minstrel field; and Joseph Hart, one of the most prolific and successful producers of modern vaudeville,

has had a long career as an actor, having also managed his own starring tour before he became a vaudeville factor. William Fox, a veritable genius in turning old and unsuccessful theatres into gold mines, only a few years ago, did a "turn" himself. Lew Fields achieved all of his greatest successes since he became the sole arbiter of their destinies.

Fred Niblo, who presides over the society known as "The White Rats," has often shown his adaptability to the managerial side of the theatre. Milton Aborn, who has become the sole impresario for opera in English and is giving grand opera in eight theatres simultaneously at this time, was a comedian of comic opera less than ten years ago. Aborn always was an important business figure as far back as his stage career can be traced, and his retirement from the artistic side was made necessary by his development as a manager.

Madison Corey who has charge of all of Mr. Savage's business matters, was a popular comedian in the Hoyt era of musical farces; as was William H. Currie, now prominent as a manager. William A. Brady only ceased to act, when he found that his services were being wasted; he came East unheralded and in a few years was hailed as one of the greatest managers and producers in the country.

The writer has thought that the impression as to the actor's incapacity for business direction has no basis, and the subject could be enlarged upon considerably, but for limitations of space.



In no branch of the stage calling has there been more progress than in the musical field, particularly that of concert direction. Forty years ago the few gentlemen

who conducted the entourage of great musical celebrities, were few in number, and these were naturally handicapped by primitive conditions; but they were impresarios, nevertheless, in the full meaning of the term.

Don Diego de Vivo was perhaps the most prominent, but there were also Carlo A. Chizzola, Henri Wertheimber, James W. Morrissey (who is still with us), Alfred Joel, John C. Fryer, Charles Dittmann and John Goodwin (now of the Goodwin Brothers who publish a turf guide).

These men were not booking agents, but were capable of performing every business detail of every phase of the musical business. They receive large salaries, not one ever had less than \$100 a week, and as high as \$250 a week was paid to men like De Vivo and Fryer. We have no such men in activity in these days, but new conditions have created a demand for a wholly different type of musical business man.

In the 70's Henry Wolfsohn, who had just failed in an operatic enterprise in the South, started, in his own home on East 14th Street, the first musical bureau. Those were not the days of telephones, nor of symphony orchestras and May festivals, but Wolfsohn, being a musician himself, and a man of much energy, began to plot and plan for an outlet for the various artists, known and unknown, that had come to register with him; and from these early efforts he expanded until at the time of his death, in 1909, he had become a factor of great dimensions. He, too, was ably assisted by his wife, Paula Wolfsohn, and after his demise the large business he had accumulated was maintained under Mrs. Wolfsohn's direction, aided by Richard Copley who had been with Mr. Wolfsohn for more than ten years.

In 1910 this concern was absorbed by the Quinlan Agency of London, England, and much is expected as a result of this amalgamation. Both Mrs. Wolfsohn and Mr. Copley remain in active capacities under the new order of things.

R. E. Johnston who has his musical bureau in the St. James Building, is typical of the modern musical purveyor; he combines musical taste with a showmanship that is rarely seen in one man in this line of effort. It would be far easier to tell whom Mr. Johnston does not represent than to try to quote all of those artists who rely on him for their artistic careers. It is fair however to state here that he is a prodigious worker and is rarely away from his office, where he is always accessible to the constant stream of business callers.

Loudon Charlton who presides over large offices in the Carnegie Hall Building, directs the tours of such illustrious artists as Mmes. Sembrich and Gadske and David Bispham. Recently he has added to his responsibilities the direction of the famous Philharmonic orchestra.

M. H. Hanson has come forward in the last few years with so rapid a gait, and his achievements have been so striking that his place in the musical world of the future may well be watched. His conduct of the American tours of Dr. Ludwig Wüllner and the famous pianist, Busoni, alone entitle him to distinction. Mr. Hanson has also become very popular in musical circles by reason of his courteous demeanor; throughout the United States any attraction under his direction is accorded wide publicity from the press. It is to Mr. Hanson's credit to observe that he per-

sonally goes over the ground months before his various stars are even announced.

J. E. Franke has a large share of the musical business of this country in his hands. He was long employed in the famous house of Steinway and Sons, and when that firm was interested in Herr Paderewski's tour, Mr. Franke was selected to represent the firm. He was so well regarded by the famous pianist himself that he was once presented with a thousand dollar bank note in appreciation of his devotion and interest. Mr. Franke was also the treasurer of the last Patti tour and was highly regarded by the diva, though the writer is unable to record that the divine one was so prolific in the use of thousand dollars bills as Herr Paderewski.

Among other musical agents who control many attractions and are influential, may be named Howard Pew, Haensel and Jones, Walter B. Anderson, G. Godfrey Turner, Frank Gerth and H. G. Snow. The last named has had vast experience in the routing of musical stars, his most recent activity being in behalf of Oscar Hammerstein in the conduct of the Tetrassini concert tour.

In Philadelphia, Herr Behrens looks after the majority of important musical events, including the local seasons of the Metropolitan Opera House Company. Herr Behrens has been active for more than half a century and he was the highly regarded conductor of grand opera in the days of the Strakosches; he may not have been a Toscanini, but there were no better in his day, that is certain.

In Boston, the city of the world's greatest symphony orchestra, there are impresarios in plenty, the foremost being C. E. Ellis, a man of vigorous application

and tremendous energy, whose interests are constantly multiplying. Mr. Ellis directs the tours of Mr. Higginson's Boston Symphony Orchestra and has been Mme. Nellie Melba's impresario for many years.

Mr. Mudgett who is the manager of Symphony Hall in Boston, has charge of a vast number of yearly concert courses, and his activity knows no bounds.

In Chicago, F. Wight Newman is at the helm, and 90 per cent of the most important musical events of the year are under his direction, including the annual visits of the Metropolitan Opera House Company; though after this year, when the permanent opera seasons begin, Mr. Newman will be succeeded by Bernhard Ulrich who has come into prominence in Baltimore through his interest in all matters of musical moment.

Max Rabinoff is another Chicago impresario, he was recently wedded to a new member of the Metropolitan Opera Company, Miss Mary Lasalle who hailed from Beatrice, Nebraska, and like so many other American girls went abroad for tuition and is now about to be heard in her native land for the first time.

In Toronto there is a manager, Stewart Houston, who stands high in musical circles, and it is a mediocre attraction indeed that Mr. Houston is not able to send away from Toronto with handsome profits.

In Montreal, L. M. Ruben, one of the most capable and oldest of musical business men, is now the power behind the throne at Windsor Hall. Mr. Ruben was a musical agent, to the writer's knowledge, thirty-five years ago, and he was prominent always. He gave valuable aid to Maurice Grau for many years at The Metropolitan Opera House and is altogether the oldest of living entrepreneurs.

Los Angeles being a city of tremendous growth and results, has given a musical account of itself that is recorded in the next chapter in this volume. Much of the fame which has come to this beautiful city, is due to its progress from a musical standpoint, and the man who, more than any other individual or association of individuals, was instrumental in bringing about these desired results, is L. E. Behymer whom the writer had occasion to pay tribute to in the previous volume, but whose efforts are constantly increasing and providing musical history. Here we have a real public-spirited business man who will tell the impresario of grand opera to tax Los Angeles a few hundred dollars more a night, so that some smaller city can hear the great stars for much less.

So it is with the concert stars and the big symphony orchestras; Mr. Behymer brings them to the coast and takes all the risk, and he has persisted in the highest grade of music, not only in California, but throughout the great Northwest. His popularity is shown, when, on rare occasions, he comes East; his stay is always prolonged beyond the limit of his time, in his endeavor to penetrate deeply into the latest achievements musically; and he will go one thousand miles any day to hear a promising artist. Behymer naturally is proud of Los Angeles' position to-day in the musical world, with its self supporting symphony orchestras and its plethora of singing organizations. The Greek Theatre at Berkely has permitted the ordering and placing of events of a colossal character. He is also the director of a large auditorium in his chosen city, while his annual musical course has an array of musical celebrities which can not be paralleled in any of the large Eastern centres.

CHAPTER XI

LOS ANGELES, THE WONDER CITY OF PROGRESS—THE INFLUENCE OF L. E. BEHYMER AND HARLEY HAMILTON—THE THEATRICAL LAWYER—MASSACHUSETTS' OBJECTIONABLE LAWS—THE TRUTH ABOUT SUNDAY THEATRES—THE THEATRICAL JOURNAL, AND THE WRITERS ON STAGE MATTERS—THE MAN OF LETTERS ALWAYS IN DEMAND IN THE BUSINESS DEPARTMENT OF THE THEATRE—THE MUSICAL WEEKLY.

The writer has selected Los Angeles as an illustrative locale, in his desire to reveal to the reader just what has been the progress in a city of this class in forty years. It will be found that even twenty years has sufficed to transform a mixed Spanish and Mexican community where "Blind Tom" was the annual musical event to the wonder city that it is to-day.

The city of Los Angeles best lends itself to the purpose of the writer who has endeavored to impress the reader with the importance of the work now going on in such cities. It is on the working out of the problems now being solved in them that the prophecy of a national opera is based.

Forty years ago theatricals in Los Angeles were confined to a few traveling companies, some of them coming overland, playing in old Merced Hall, near the Plaza, where three civilizations meet: the Chinese and Japanese at one corner of the triangle, the Spanish and Mexican at a second, and the "Gingos," or Ameri-

cans, at the third. Weddings, funerals, religious ceremonies, minstrels, and masquerades—all took place in old Merced Hall.

Shortly afterwards the Turners built the old Turnverein Hall, which stood on the lots now occupied by the Orpheum, first known as the Los Angeles Theatre.

The first opera house was opened Tuesday evening, May 27, 1884, and known as the Los Angeles Opera House, under the management of O. W. Childs. Mlle. Rhea, the French society star, opened the house, presenting "The School for Scandal," and following with "Frou Frou."

During that first season Los Angeles was visited by the Emerson Minstrels, Nat C. Goodwin, playing his first engagement on January 23; he is now making Los Angeles his home, living in the suburb of Ocean Park.

Daniel Bandmann, Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Sheridan, Charlotte Thompson, Kate Castleton, Joseph Grismer and Phoebe Davies, Fay Templeton, Katie Putman, J. M. Ward and Rose Eytinge, constituted the theatrical treats for that season.

The next year manager H. C. Wyatt, who had visited Los Angeles as a member of the Wyatt & Girard Minstrel Company, in 1884, and remembered the climatic influences, secured the management of the Grand Opera House for a number of seasons, until the opening of the New Los Angeles Theatre, December 17, 1888, when he assumed the management of that house, relinquishing the Grand Opera House to McLain & Lehman.

In 1891 the first stock house in Los Angeles was opened by Fred A. Cooper on the completion of the Burbank Theatre, and in 1895 the first vaudeville

theatre was opened in Mott's Hall, under the management of Jake Gottloeb, Martin Lehman and Alfred Ellinghouse. Mr. Gottloeb is now manager of the Van Ness Theatre in San Francisco, also the new Columbia, while Martin Lehman is part owner in the Orpheum Circuit of vaudeville theatres.

The following year saw the Grand Opera House change hands and become the Orpheum of Los Angeles, being the advent of the Meyerfeld Syndicate, at that time headed by and under the management of Gustave Walter.

A second stock house was added during this year in the shape of the Park Theatre, under the management of D. P. Stoner.

In 1898 the Burbank Theatre changed hands and Oliver Morosco took charge of its destinies; and in 1903 the Mason Opera House was opened under the management of H. C. Wyatt. Mr. Wyatt died July 25, 1910.

The Belasco Theatre was built the following year by local capitalists, Frederick Belasco of San Francisco, and John Blackwood, manager of Mrs. Leslie Carter.

In 1906 the Temple Auditorium, Theatre Beautiful, the most perfectly equipped house on the Pacific Coast, was built by the stockholders of the Temple Baptist Church. It is now the home of the Sam S. and Lee Shubert attractions.

The year following saw the advent of the John Cort Syndicate in Los Angeles, who direct the affairs of the new Majestic Theatre under the local management of Oliver Morosco.

In 1905 the new Los Angeles Theatre was built, since which time it has experienced many vicissitudes,

but is now the home of Sullivan & Considine's vaudeville.

The musical history of Los Angeles in the last twenty years has been a most interesting one; that a town at that time numbering 50,000 could increase to a metropolis of 325,000, was phenomenal in itself.

Twenty years ago Los Angeles could boast of but two pipe organs, and did not have a city band. Blind Tom and Remenyi were about the only musical geniuses that wandered to the extreme southwest in those days. Some of the early visitors in the last forty years were Fannie Bloomfield-Zeisler, and Ovid Musin, while in 1883 came Patti, in 1884 the American National Opera Company, and the same season Emma Abbott was heard.

Since that time, however, Los Angeles has been gradually growing. The Grau Metropolitan Opera Company always had this city on its itinerary when they came west to San Francisco, and some of the largest guarantees given anywhere in the world have been given to the Grand Opera companies, and great artists who have stopped within the municipal precincts of Los Angeles.

"La Boheme" was sung by the Maurice Grau Grand Opera Company at its initial production in the United States, and Mme. Melba created the role of Mimi in this country in the old Hazard Pavilion, under the local management of L. E. Behymer.

For seventeen years Los Angeles has boasted of a Woman's Symphony Orchestra of sixty-five pieces, and for fourteen years has given symphony programs under the direction of Mr. Harley Hamilton with the Los Angeles Symphony Orchestra, numbering seventy-seven men.

The Conried Company brought "Parsifal" to Los Angeles and received \$10,000.00 for one night, with Fremstad and Burgstaller in the leading roles. During this engagement of the Conried Company "Lucia" was sung with Mme. Marcella Sembrich and Enrico Caruso in the leading roles.

In the High Schools of Los Angeles may be found two young folks' symphony orchestras. Each school has its own glee club. In the grammar grades of Los Angeles' public schools, under the efficient direction of Miss Katherine Stone, may be found sixteen symphony orchestras composed of boys and girls.

The church choirs are filled by exceptionally talented vocalists, and Blanchard Hall is peopled with over five hundred teachers, all of them apparently successful.

Los Angeles buys more pianos and talking machines per capita, according to population, than any other city in the world.

Mr. Behymer established his great Philharmonic course twelve years ago, and during that time all of the greatest vocalists and instrumentalists of the world have visited this section.

The public library of Los Angeles is considered one of the best musical library sections outside of the big metropolitan libraries of the East, and contains a unique collection of over twelve hundred records made by the Indians in reproducing the instrumental and vocal music of the various tribes of the Southwest. This has been compiled under the direction of Mr. Charles F. Lummis, City Librarian.

Last season \$10,000 was appropriated for a municipal band, and this year the amount is to be five times larger, as the Los Angeles solons have discovered that

to have music in their parks as well as in their homes, minimizes crime.

There is much agitation at the present time over the possibility of arranging for a public library, art gallery and music hall combined, so that the big musical affairs may have a permanent home, and the symphony concerts be given at a minimum admission. Manager Behymer has taken these matters in hand and assures the musical world that within the next two years Los Angeles will stand at the head of musical endeavor in the great West.

Among the clubs devoted to music, the city can boast of the Ellis Club, consisting of two hundred of the leading business men of the city, a vocal organization which has been in existence for twenty-eight consecutive seasons; the Woman's Lyric Club, under Mr. J. B. Poulin, one of the best singing clubs, composed entirely of women, in Southern California; the Dominant Club; the Woman's Social Club which represents the social musical condition, while the Gamut Club, to which belong over three hundred of the leading men who are interested in music, art and literature, and which has been in existence successively for over eight years represents the Men's Social Bohemian Organization.

The Orpheus Club has seen four years of successful endeavor under the direction of Mr. Joseph Dupuy, and is made up of eighty voices of the younger male singing element in the city. The Treble Clef Club is another woman's organization, giving oratorios and song cycles with excellent effect. The Lott-Krauss Chamber Concert Club is composed of five musicians who have worked together for many seasons and give the best ensemble playing in the Southwest, is the

only chamber music club in southern California. The Los Angeles Center of the American Music Society numbers one hundred and twenty members, and is now in its second year; they give three concerts yearly.

There are over two thousand teachers of music in Los Angeles alone—many of them specialists, and there are quite a number of composers. Plans have just been completed for a large musical demonstration during April, 1911, when Los Angeles and the Southwest will give its first musical festival of note, and which will unite all of the musical interests of the Southwest in competitive arraignment. Probably no other section of the United States has developed as quickly, musically speaking, as Los Angeles; and much of it can be attributed to the activities of the L. A. Symphony Orchestra, its members and board of directors, and L. E. Behymer, who has handled every musical affair in this section, as well as the larger towns of Arizona, New Mexico and California, and he takes upon himself the enormous guarantee which attract the "Best in Music" to the great Southwest.

Fourteen years ago several members of the Los Angeles Theatre Orchestra, together with their director, and L. E. Behymer, treasurer of the theatre, discussed the possibilities of a permanent symphony orchestra, with a chance for a permanent endowment, which resulted in the formation of the Los Angeles Symphony Orchestra of thirty-three members under the direction of Harley Hamilton and the business management of L. E. Behymer.

The first season ten concerts were given, and at the close of the year each member of the organization, together with the conductor and manager, received as a dividend \$1.29 apiece. Next year Mr. Hamilton and

Mr. Behymer furnished the sinews of war, providing over \$1,200 each and their labor. Several of the influential men and women of the city tendered their assistance in the following year, Mrs. Emily Newton taking an active interest as well as guaranteeing against any financial losses, increasing the membership of the orchestra to sixty.

At the close of the fifth season the active work of support was turned over to the present Board of Directors, and since that time the Los Angeles Symphony Orchestra has become a permanent factor in the musical interests of the city; its membership is now seventy-seven. Director Hamilton has continued through all of its vicissitudes as its conductor and instructor, and Manager Behymer has given his time, money and brains toward developing a sufficient income to make it a permanent organization and an advertising medium which has attracted more home-seekers than all of the efforts of the commercial bodies combined.

Mrs. Louise McNeil, the president, together with Mrs. Solana, Mrs. John S. Chapman, Mr. W. H. Booth, Miss Mira Mershey, Mrs. W. G. Kerchoff, Mrs. H. L. Story, Mr. Fred A. Walton, Mrs. J. G. Mossin, Miss Victoria Witmer, Mrs. Fred Bixby, Mrs. W. F. Botsford, Dr. Norman Bridge, Dr. A. L. Macleish, Mrs. J. O. Koepfli, Mrs. James Slauson, Mrs. Walter Raymond and Mrs. Howard Huntington constitute the Board of Directors, and should be credited for their activity in securing financial recognition for this organization, while Mr. Hamilton has proven a tower of strength in this musical work. He has given his time and talents towards making this organization perfect.

No other city in America of 300,000 has sustained a symphony orchestra for fourteen consecutive seasons. Among the soloists who have appeared with this organization are such sterling artists as Emelio de Gogorza, Tillie Koenen, George Hamlin, Anton Hehking, Maud Powell, Jeanne Jomelli, Madame Carreno, David Bispham, Adele Verne, Mme. Gadski and others.

Eighteen years ago Harley Hamilton organized the Woman's Orchestra of Los Angeles, and since that time has been the conductor, teacher and friend of the members of this organization. Los Angeles is distinguished because it not only maintains its regular symphony orchestra of men players, but an excellent symphony orchestra composed entirely of women to the number of sixty-five, who have given concerts since 1892. All the orchestral instruments are represented, including oboes, horns and tympani, and at each concert a complete symphony is performed.

Since Mr. Hamilton organized this unique enterprise, the Woman's Orchestra of Los Angeles has filled the place of a great conservatory orchestra in an older community, and as such the music lovers of Los Angeles have always given it their hearty support. It has been an inspiration to the players in many smaller amateur orchestras in California, many of whom have graduated into the older organization, and also has been an influence in creating an atmosphere of musical enthusiasm in the city.

Its president is Miss Cora Foy; its director, Mr. Harley Hamilton, with Mr. L. E. Behymer as business manager. This season three concerts will be given in public. Most of its rehearsals take the form of private concerts where music students may sit and

improve their minds. Much credit belongs to Miss Foy, who has worked many years to perfect this organization; Edna Foy Neher is the concert mistress, and Viola Foley, librarian.



Forty years ago Edward Lauterbach and Ex-Judge Dittenhoeffer were the leading legal figures in the amusement world, and they still represent the more important litigation for the foremost interests in the field of the theatre.

Maurice Grau studied for the bar in Mr. Lauterbach's office, the firm at that time being known as Lauterbach and Spingarn.

The theatrical lawyer has become, in modern times, a conspicuous personage, and all of the large amusement concerns retain counsel by the year. This state of affairs has added greatly to the constructive side of the business itself, and much of the discipline and rectitude, which has come to this now prosperous calling, is due to the manner in which our magnates of the theatre are protected in the courts of the country.

A legal firm, greatly used by managers and artists alike, is that of House, Vorhaus and Grossman, and these gentlemen have had to do with many of the most important legal decisions handed down in recent years. They represent also the largest clientele of a distinctly theatrical type in this country. Mr. William Grossman of this firm has been prominent, also, in many cases where his efforts were of a truly public-spirited character, and he has been persistent in fostering legal procedure, which has resulted in many desired reforms.

William Klein, during the past ten years, has been active in the courts almost exclusively in theatrical

litigation. He is the treasured advocate of the Messrs. Shubert, and by this representation is affiliated with a large percentage of the celebrities in theatredom, and their legal interests are solely vested in his hands. Mr. Klein has charge of Miss Julia Marlowe's legal affairs, also Mr. Sothern's. The "New York Herald" paid a handsome tribute to Mr. Klein, and he was credited by that newspaper with many achievements. The late S. S. Shubert was always to be found in company with Mr. Klein, and the two planned together much that has since been achieved.

David Gerber, associated with Ex-Judge Dittenhoeffer, has a large theatrical clientele, and his name figures almost constantly in connection with the disputes so common between conflicting interests in the musical and dramatic world.

Benno Loewy has been a member of the bar for four decades and has always represented managerial clients. Mr. Loewy is particularly noted for his ability as a pleader; and he has also won considerable fame as an author.

Leon Laski has prospered greatly, because of his conscientious treatment of his vast clientele, and the same may be said of Louis S. Posner, a young lawyer who has come forward in the last few years, and whose advice is eagerly sought by theatrical clients.

Mr. Theodore Sutro, who is celebrated as a lawyer, author, orator and art patron as well as a social figure, is of the law firm of Sutro and Wright, and by reason of his extensive acquaintance with the most distinguished musical and dramatic celebrities, has a select clientele among them, in addition to his general practice which embraces many corporate and varied interests. Some of his most important cases in recent

years for operatic stars have had a most successful termination in favor of those whom he represented. Since the death of his charming young wife, who was greatly beloved in the artistic world and fairly worshipped by Mr. Sutro, he has taken even a more prominent part in numberless public affairs than formerly, doubtless due to a curtailment of his erstwhile social entertainments and his desire to seek distraction from his unceasing grief. He has been called to the leadership of the German-American population of the State of New York. As President of the German-American Alliance and of the United German Societies of the City of New York he keeps incessantly busy with these and other civic and social duties, not to speak of his writings and his innumerable engagements as a speaker both in German and English on all manner of public and festive occasions.

Edwin B. Root was prominent in the famous Metropolitan-Manhattan Opera settlement, a proceeding which well illustrates the extraordinary part the modern advocate plays in the business side of the artistic world. Mr. Root was Mr. Hammerstein's representative in the momentous transaction, and he sailed for England to obtain the latter's verification, returning on the same steamer, all within a fortnight.

Herman L. Roth is known to every manager and player in America, and he conducts perhaps the largest general theatrical legal business in New York. A few years ago he inaugurated the Actor's Legal Aid Society, and has performed exemplary service in behalf of the small waged player of both sexes. Mr. Roth is also interested in many amusement enterprises, and is a stockholder in several corporations.

Dennis F. O'Brien is the attorney of the famous "White Rats of America," and in this capacity conducts an avalanche of litigation. Just now he is active in an effort to amend the laws governing booking agents in the vaudeville field, and he is surely a vigorous pleader for the good of the society he so ably represents. Maurice Goodman is the exclusive attorney of the United Booking Offices, and this association brings him into the courts to his heart's content.

Moses A. Sachs has always made a feature of theatrical litigation and his services have been in large request in recent years, because of the results achieved by him in several notable instances.

In Boston, Thomas J. Barry is the leading figure in the legal world in distinctly theatrical practice; he is one of the landmarks of the Hub as well. Although Mr. Barry, by reason of his legal position, is often compelled to assume an antagonistic attitude towards even his own personal friends, no man in the legal profession is more popular.

Boston is an important legal centre from a theatrical standpoint, because of what is known as mesne proceedings and the Child Labor Law. The former being one of the most objectionable and unfair methods of inconveniencing the strolling showman, that is to-day in evidence in the United States. The efforts now being made to abolish or amend this law, are being watched with feverish anxiety by the entire theatrical profession. Mr. Barry has of course been a factor on both sides of this proposition; undoubtedly he is not responsible for the existence of the law itself.

Jacobs and Jacobs, like Mr. Barry, are active in the city of culture, and they are kept busy by the neces-

sities of existing laws. The Messrs. Jacobs have, however, expressed themselves as favoring a reorganization of the Bay State's objectionable legal features.

Adolph Marks is Chicago's theatrical lawyer, and he is known to every player and manager who visits the windy city. He, too, has been busily occupied in recent years in an effort to ameliorate the conditions, which his clients are forced to undergo; and the outlook is, that ere these pages are in press, the "hold up" method of grasping and conscienceless "attorneys" in the West will have been considerably modified.

In some of the smaller cities one finds the interests of the nomadic professional safely guarded. I have in mind the legal representative of the Mozart Circuit in Lancaster, Pa., R. V. Alexander by name; he has achieved results of an almost extraordinary nature, both for his own corporation, for he is a stockholder in the Mozart Circuit, and for the artists with whom this connection has brought him in contact.

The array of legal talent which was brought into use to bring about the recent upheaval in grand opera matters, is thoroughly illustrative of the progressive era in which we live. For several weeks, such eminent legal lights, as Samuel Untermeyer, Paul D. Cravath and Edwin B. Root, labored and conferred, until they had effected a mode of procedure, so perfect and so impregnable, that the complications which would seemingly appear in such a momentous transaction to be irreconcilable, were disposed of simply through the employees of the various opera houses affected.



Much interest has been aroused of late in the efforts to ameliorate the condition of amusement endeavorers

through the various laws of our own land. The writer, in his desire to present an impartial point of view to his readers, consulted eminent legal authorities in Boston, for in Massachusetts we have two methods of legal procedure, which have caused much embarrassment to many, wholly disconnected with the cause for action.

The action known as "Arrest on Mesne Process" is perhaps the most serious and objectionable method for collecting on debts or judgments in operation in this country. Years ago Rhode Island had the severest laws, or shall I say the weakest? In Massachusetts it is possible to cause the arrest of a transient person, upon the affidavit of a third party that to his knowledge and belief the defendant is indebted to his client, and furthermore is about to leave the state, with intent to defraud the plaintiff. The execution and service of the mesne process in Boston is characterized with more severity than is to-day practiced in New York for murder. Everything is done to coerce the alleged debtor, and in the majority of cases settlement is made to effect the liberty of the defendant.

The law itself is by no means upon investigation an evil one. Such well known lawyers as Thomas J. Barry and Joseph B. Jacobs, of Boston, have expressed themselves (and they act for clients, for and against) as favoring the law upon the principle that the ones to remonstrate are managers and players who evade just debts, and that the cases of hundreds of stranded professionals have been relieved by the Mesne Process of arrest.

The writer, however, regards the views of the eminent counsel as an expression of a mere minority. The majority of the actions tend to seriously embarrass

men and women of high standing and much inexperience, who are taken suddenly a few moments before they are to appear in public, and subjected to much indignity at the hands of a constable who has made this method of collection a fine point.

Some of the world's greatest grand opera stars have been "taken" on mesne proceedings and the conduct of the constable has been such as to force a settlement, if, by any chance, sufficient funds were available. The remedies are well and good, for an experienced or blasé defendant, but to one not expecting the arrest, the proceedings appear to be most serious. The "victim" thinks only of settlement; the constable is careful to magnify the matter in his eyes, and cleverly enough leads the defendant quickly away from any possible contact with friends. These constables do not want bail cases; they are for a cash settlement on the spot, and to facilitate it, a "scare" is thrown at the defendant, which, with the timeliness of the "arrest," serves to effect it far more often than not, apart from all question of merits as to the claim.

It is in the execution of these proceedings that a remedy is needed, but the error is made in asking for a change of the law itself, which as it undoubtedly does good to a larger number of persons than it harms, will survive.

The child labor law in the same state has been effective in restraining the production of many plays, operas and specialties, in which a child under fifteen years of age is a leading figure. Recently in an effort to have this law abolished, eminent artists, managers and counsel, endeavored to point out to the learned justice presiding, that the player, singer or specialist could only reach a perfect artistic status by inaugurat-

ing their careers in early youth, and cases cited in illustration were the careers of Lotta, Josef Hoffmann, Francis Wilson and Mabel Taliaferro. The justice held that these instances were the exception rather than the rule, and little progress towards any amelioration of the law has been made.

It would seem that an amendment which would permit a child to appear in public in the same company with its parents and under their guidance, would not only serve to make possible the more important productions in which the child performer is a vital factor, but would also provide an unquestionable argument for the passing of such an amendment. These laws are created not to embarrass, but with intent to achieve the greatest possible good. The error made in the effort to secure a remedy, is that the law itself is attacked as vicious; a contention not borne out by facts established at the hearing.

Shall our theatres be opened on the seventh day of the week? Here we have a query of enough importance to require a carefully considered reply; yet the subject is simple in all respects. It must be assumed, of course, that the community known as Greater New York alone figures in this recital.

Sunday theatres were prevailing in the metropolis a generation ago, under laws precisely as they are to-day, though managers as a rule did not avail themselves of the seeming privilege.

Terrace Garden, on East 59th Street, and the German theatres, gave the same performance on Sunday as during the week, for many years, without the least effort upon the part of the authorities to check their progress.

In 1894, when the era of continuous vaudeville be-

gan, the managers in that field, not satisfied that they were attracting the public at least twelve times a week to their establishments; inaugurated "Sunday Sacred Concerts," the same being given twice on that day. Though the public response was at first inadequate, persistent continuance of the policy led to a general adoption of it, not only by the theatres devoted to vaudeville during the week, but several of the legitimate theatres found that by opening their doors on Sunday and presenting a vaudeville programme, they were able to make a profit so large as to virtually give them their theatres rent free throughout the year.

The theatres, such as are conducted by Charles Frohman and the so-called Theatrical Syndicate, have remained closed on Sunday, save in rare instances, though the New York Theatre has periodically proven a gold mine for Sunday concerts with smoking permitted in the auditorium.

The Messrs. Frohman and Klaw and Erlanger have often expressed themselves as being opposed to Sunday theatricals, and it is doubtful if these gentlemen would avail themselves of any law which permitted them to present the current attraction of the week on Sundays.

But the question presents itself as to whether it is not as legal for "The Dollar Princess" to be rendered on Sunday as the diversified programme which is seen in Mr. Hammerstein's Victoria Theatre, or in Mr. Keith's or Mr. Proctor's Theatre. Mr. Keith, when he began the "continuous" era, posed in a grandiose manner as a moralist. All of his advertisements had a line: "This theatre is never opened on Sunday," and his contracts with performers had a similar clause spectacularly displayed; but when Mr. Keith com-

bined with Mr. Proctor, the vaudeville performer discovered that he would be allowed to labor on the Sabbath in their theatres, without the necessity of being embarrassed by the receipt of an extra day's pay in his envelope on salary day.

Concerts such as are given at the Metropolitan Opera House and Carnegie Hall on Sunday evenings, are legal, and the existing laws do not permit of any broader interpretation. Yet, operas, plays, pantomimes, ballet, etc., are included in the vaudeville offerings on Sundays; but any attempt to open wide the doors of the regular theatres on that day with similar attractions would be resisted.

The Messrs. Shubert who own, lease or control fifteen theatres and the Hippodrome, have become restless under what they are inclined to consider unjust discrimination.

The time is ripe for a test of the situation. New York has a distinctly cosmopolitan population, seventy per cent of which is of foreign cast. The Germans, French, Italians and Russians are accustomed to regard Sunday as their great theatre day. The Hebrew theatres in the Ghetto district give two performances on that day to audiences which test their capacity, and if our two opera houses were open on Sunday evenings, with grand opera, an empty seat would never be seen.

Nevertheless, in the West where the Sunday theatre is an established fact, the patronage extended has developed the fact that those who go on Sunday would go during the week, for such theatres or attractions as are opposed to Sabbath representations, have taken as much money in six days as others, differently disposed, are able to record in seven, while grand opera

has never been able to draw out a paying audience save for a distinctly popular performance without stars.

Therefore, the question at stake is one of equity, rather than of any great financial benefit to the managers themselves; while it is not unlikely that were all of the theatres closed on Sunday, even the vaudeville portion thereof would suffer no great loss.

The whole matter is on the eve of being thoroughly threshed out, with the ultimate purpose of either closing all places of amusement on Sunday, save to classical, or vocal and instrumental concerts, which represent the legal right, or else to make optional to all classes of theatres to violate the law as is now being done openly by the vaudeville theatres.



The first of the existing theatrical journals of a class nature was the "New York Clipper," founded by Frank Queen, and at all times during its prolonged career it has maintained a dignified and conservative policy, which has enabled its successive owners to expand despite all competition. The "Clipper" is recognized as an authority by the entire amusement calling, and at no time has its influence been greater than to-day.

The "New York Dramatic Mirror" is a modification of the "Philadelphia Mirror," which, thirty odd years ago, was started in the Quaker City. Ernest Harvier and Stephen Fiske inaugurated the "New York Mirror," and it was from these gentlemen that Mr. Harrison G. Fiske acquired the property, which he so successfully conducts at this time. Mr. Fiske has, at various periods, waged a journalistic war against the Theatrical Syndicate, but all is now peaceful in these

quarters by reason of an affiliation in the year 1909, by which David Belasco and the editor of the "Mirror" are presenting their stars and plays in the theatres booked by Messrs. Klaw and Erlanger and their associates.

The "Dramatic News" was originally started by Charles Alfred Byrne who passed away in 1909. He was perhaps the most aggressive writer for the stage of his generation. Mr. Byrne was a dramatic critic on the "New York Herald" forty years ago, and at various periods held a similar position on the "Morning Journal," "Truth," "Comment," and other periodicals, now extinct. He was also a theatrical and operatic manager as far back as 1869, when, in partnership with the late Starr Morrissey, (a brother of James W.), he presented Mrs. Howard Paul, (wife of the brilliant journalist), in "La Grande Duchesse," at what is now The 14th Street Theatre. The Offenbach operetta was presented in French by Mrs. Paul and she gave a really artistic rendition of the title role.

Mr. Byrne married Alfa Norman, a prima donna of some repute in the 80's, and under his backing about two years of life was given to the operatic organization, headed by Mme. Norman. He also was quite prolific as a writer for the stage, his best known work being "The Isle of Champagne," in which he collaborated with Louis Harrison. Just before his death he launched a daily musical paper, called the "Opera Goer," which was intended to serve as a guide to opera lovers. The paper, however, was shortlived, but, like all of Byrne's efforts, was decidedly readable. In many respects Byrne was a remarkable man, and that he was unquestionably one of the most brilliant writers for the stage of all time, few will deny. He wrote

fearlessly and often was engaged in pitched battles, (some impromptu, and others carefully planned), and he rarely came out from any of these the worse for the wear. Even when he had passed the half-century mark, his demeanor was aggressive.

The "Dramatic News" was owned by "Josh" Hart, an old time variety manager who directed the Theatre Comique at 514 Broadway in the heyday of Harrigan and Hart, and The Eagle, afterward the Manhattan Theatre, now the site of the Gimbel Stores.

Leander Richardson became prominent with this publication and he has been, for more than a quarter of a century, one of the most brilliant writers of the distinctly personal side of the stage and its people. Mr. Richardson has published various theatrical journals, and is at this time providing the most interesting columns for the new theatrical weekly, the "New York Review," a publication launched in 1909 for the sole purpose of maintaining a printer's ink war against the so-called Theatrical Syndicate by its most conspicuous opponent.

After Mr. Richardson left the "Dramatic News," Gus Heckler, now a well-known wine agent, was the tour de force for a few years, but about twenty years ago Edwin T. Bettelheim took the helm, and the paper is still issued under his guidance.

During the career of the "Dramatic News," Will A. MacConnell and Frederick Edward Mackay were prominent in the editorial chair, and these gentlemen here named were the representative writers for the theatre. Their qualification was that they gave a personal note to their efforts, and to this day their style of writing is finding vogue to a greatly increased degree.

The "Morning Telegraph" was the old "New York Mercury," a weekly, which, a generation ago, cut a wide swath; its dramatic editor was Alfred L. Parkes, a brother-in-law of the Kiralfy Brothers, he having married one of the famous sisters of this family of dancers.

On the Telegraph's staff practically all of the writers named held sway at some time or other, and there has always been a place on its staff for capable writers with an intimate style. Its present leading figure is Renold Wolf who virtually grew to his present popularity and efficiency with the progress of the publication itself. The "Morning Telegraph" is the first five cent daily to survive, and its success is due undoubtedly to the vast progress which has come to the entire theatrical profession, and its ability to maintain its standard at all times, as well as to weather the many financial storms which it has naturally had to pass through.

The "Morning Telegraph," however, is not the first five cent theatrical daily. John C. Freund, now editor of "Musical America," and one of the most brilliant as well as energetic newspaper men in this country, issued, in the year 1884, a daily, called "Freund's Music and the Drama," but though it was an intensely interesting sheet, its life was short, due to the fact that its day was not that of the five cent daily newspaper.

In Chicago, Davison Dalziel, (now the magnate and owner of "Dalziel's News," an important London news agency), published a theatrical weekly, called the "News Letter." He was assisted by A. P. Dunlop, long with the "Morning Journal" and "Daily American" in this city. This paper weathered the storm for a few years.

Roland Burke Hennessy has had theatrical publications for many years, and his present issue, the "New York Star," is noted for a particularly fine class of illustrations.

It was in the early 80's that the big New York dailies began to add to their editorial service the personage then known as "theatrical newsgatherer." About this time several of the morning papers added evening editions in emulation of the "New York Herald's" policy with the "Evening Telegram," and these evening editions were the first to make a feature of a readable theatrical column, generally accompanied with a pleasing personal point of view, for which the readers seemed grateful.

"Allan Dale," (Mr. Cohen), began in this manner on the "Evening World," and his style has not changed in the least during his quarter of a century of service. In the 80's Mr. Cohen was quite as entertaining as now, but it would be interesting indeed to compare his earnings at that period with those, which he to-day has to his credit.

The "Evening Sun," from the day of its inauguration as an evening newspaper, had one of the best daily columns of distinctly personal theatrical news within recollection of the writer, and in the more than two decades of its existence, it has had but three incumbents. The first was J. Austin Fynes, afterward the general manager for B. F. Keith, and a man who has provided much history by his efforts for vaudeville. His successor was Charles Dillingham who afterwards became one of the greatest managerial factors as well as one of the most important producers in the amusement world.

Mr. Dillingham, perhaps more than others of the

graduates from Park Row to theatredom, emphasized the advisability on the part of American managers to lean towards the journalists in the selection of their advance agents. Charles Frohman found Dillingham so far out of the ordinary that he retained his services at a magnificent salary as long as the latter could be kept under a fixed honorarium. The two, however, have remained intimate friends and are in no sense business rivals at this time.

After Dillingham the "Evening Sun" secured the present incumbent, Acton Davies, as its dramatic writer. The paper, however, progressed to the extent that the musical column is separated from the dramatic, and it is but fair to state that both are regarded as the most readable, as well as the most influential in the city. Mr. Davies particularly is considered not only one of the most brilliant theatrical chroniclers in America, but he is also accorded serious consideration by the Sun's readers and by the entire theatrical profession. His criticisms are valued and reproduced to a greater extent than those of any individual writer for the stage that can here be recalled.

Frederick Edward Mackay, now with the "Evening Mail" as its dramatic critic, has for more than twenty years been intimately associated with metropolitan theatrical journalism. He is known all over the world in this capacity, and has an extensive acquaintance with every phase of amusement endeavor to such an extent that his services have often been sought in the business department of the theatre, but Mr. Mackay is a veritable New Yorker and is not kindly disposed towards absenting himself from Broadway.

Samuel Weller, now editor of the "New York Review," was long on the staff of the "Telegraph," and

he, too, as a result of his efficiency in this field, has occupied important positions in the theatres and with first-class attractions. He was Henry Miller's manager during that gentleman's tenancy of The Princess Theatre in conjunction with the Shuberts, and he has had charge of the publicity department of many important musical enterprises.

Distinctly vaudeville writers are few, or rather have not shone in the lime light strikingly. The most efficient is Epes W. Sargent, known under the pen name "Chicot" who was first observed on the "Morning Telegraph," where he attracted much attention by his independent style of criticism of the various turns that he was wont to review. "Chicot" flitted from one paper to another, and several times has launched periodicals, devoted to vaudeville news. Some of these issued before the era of affluence to all vaudeville ventures had to be abandoned. The first to succeed permanently was "Variety," which came into being four years ago.

"Chicot" was on its staff at the time of inauguration, but his name disappeared very soon afterward. This paper has been conducted by Sime J. Silverman, and he has certainly made an enormous success of the enterprise, though he will not deny that he was fortunate to time his undertaking at the very period, when vaudeville was changing the face of the theatrical map.

About three years ago, Charles F. Zittel, under the nom de plume of "Zit," started in the "Evening Telegram" the first vaudeville column, now so popular in the "Evening Journal." His method has been most ingenious. He evolved a plan of "Chart Criticisms." At first it was not fully comprehended by vaudevill-

iens, but "Zit" persevered and transferred his efforts to the "Evening Mail" after a time, and finally to the "Evening Journal," where his unique and interesting records of vaudeville achievements have found a permanent and lucrative field. Mr. Zittel, it may be stated, is responsible for the great vogue, which has come to Eva Tanguay. He was her first manager, and his exploitation of the strenuous chanteuse has always been regarded as the main cause of her rapid advancement, and resulted in her salary increasing 1,000 per cent in less than two years. Miss Tanguay herself publicly acknowledged that to Mr. Zittel she owed all of her present success, and this rare demonstration of loyalty on her part was extensively inserted in various periodicals at a period in her career, when it would hardly have been necessary for her to pose in any manner; hence, it was generally regarded as a sincere and graceful tribute to the young writer.

Within the last two years a journal long devoted to strictly musical records and criticisms, the "American Musician" by name, shifted to vaudeville, the move being prompted no doubt by the vast increase in vaudeville activity, and the impression that one less musical weekly, and one more vaudeville paper would be accomplished gracefully.

Strictly musical papers have been quite plentiful. The "Musical Courier," now in its zenith, has had a reign of more than thirty years, always under the direction of its present editor-in-chief, Marc M. Blumenberg, and almost from the outset it has been superior in quality, large in size and a veritable authority in musical matters. The "Musical Courier" is to-day the handsomest and most pretentious weekly class newspaper in this country, and its criticisms are valued all

over the world, while the editorials are the most eagerly awaited writings that are now evolved for musicians. The "Courier" also has its own printing plant, and it may well be proud of this fact. The European letters in this publication are intensely interesting, and some of the portraits may well be called rare, while all are reproduced in exquisite taste and clarity.

"Musical America," of which John C. Freund is the editor, has been coming forward with great strides in the last few years, and is now a perfect embarrassment of readable matter, while its circulation has grown by leaps and bounds to an enormous total at this time.

In Philadelphia the "Etude," said to be the largest circulated monthly musical magazine in America, is conducted by Theodore Presser, and is known wherever music is a factor.

In Boston Oliver Ditson and Company publish a monthly musical magazine, entitled "The Musician," and its influence, particularly in the East, is conceded by its colleagues, if one may judge by the complimentary tributes paid to its editorials by other prominent issues, devoted also to musical literature, is conceded to be widespread.

In Chicago, with New York affiliation the "Musical Leader" is the one important musical issue, and Charles French has been enabled to see his prodigious efforts to expand, rewarded by a circulation that would hardly be thought possible outside of New York.

CHAPTER XII

PERPETUITY OF PARTNERSHIP—"THE AMATEUR NIGHT" AND HOW IT ORIGINATED—THE OLD-TIME BILL POSTER WHO COLLECTED HIS BILLS WITH WARRANTS, HAS BEEN REPLACED BY MILLIONAIRE PUBLICITY CORPORATIONS—THE ART OF TERPSICHOIRE—FOUR DECADES OF DANCERS—THE MURRAY HILL THEATRE STOCK COMPANY—THE CHORISTER—MANY OF BOTH SEXES HAVE REACHED STELLAR HEIGHTS FROM THE CHORUS RANKS—ALBERT SPALDING'S SUCCESS—MAUD POWELL, TERESA CARRENO, AND JOSEFFY ARE HEARD TOO LITTLE IN NEW YORK.

To Messrs. McIntyre and Heath must be awarded the distinction of having survived in a business as well as artistic partnership without any interruption to its consecutiveness for a longer period than can be recorded for any duo still before the public.

It is however of interest to state that only in the last decade have they been accorded any great measure of financial reward, and this fact, too, demonstrates most vividly the contention of this writer to the effect that we are now in the vital era of achievement. It surely cannot be more than fifteen or sixteen years ago when this illustrious couple were playing six shows a day for B. F. Keith in Boston, and within the present decade a joint salary of \$500 per week, was eagerly accepted by them. To-day they are stars in musical comedy, playing the best theatres, but

in their annual excursions into the vaudeville field, they are granted at least \$2,000 for each seven days, and this, too, for practically the same specialty which they gave in Boston, as above related, six times daily for less than one-twelfth of their present honorarium.

Next to McIntyre and Heath the record for perpetuity of an agreement is held by John C. Rice and Sallie Cohen, who not only are able to command each year an increased salary, but they are also possessed of an unerring judgment in the selection of the material for their stage vehicles, this duo has demonstrated more than any other before the public, that a large supporting company is not a requisite for success. At no time in their lengthy career have they required aid from other players in order to score with the unique and intensely funny playlets which have served them for more than seventeen years.

Willis P. Sweatnam, now known as the actor minstrel, is perhaps the oldest in actual service of the minstrels who are still potent. For more than forty years he has been regarded as the most intellectual man who has resorted to burnt cork; in fact, his career on the minstrel stage and in vaudeville has been handicapped by his tendency to go over the heads of his audiences. It was only a question of time when his truly artistic portrayals would attract managers in the broader field, and in the last few years Sweatnam has created a number of important roles, and in none of these has he scored greater results than in the current attraction at the Broadway Theatre, "The Summer Widowers."



The "Amateur Night" was a feature of variety theatres long before the era of what is now called refined

vaudeville; the Bowery was the scene of its original glory. Here, in the old London Theatre and at Harry Miner's, twenty-odd years ago, were seen men and women, who were serious in their efforts, but absolutely ludicrous were their portayals.

This type of performance emanated from the appearances in the leading theatres of various "freaks," so called because they actually accentuated their shortcomings, and this resulted in a veritable burlesque, which was greatly contributed to by the audiences.

The first of these was the "Count Joannes," also known as George Jones, and once a real actor in the old Bowery Theatre. Jones was, by training and instinct, an intelligent player; he was not the fool his audiences took him to be. He saw that if he would permit his hearers—Wall Street brokers and men about town—to have fun with him, he could prosper, and he thought better of that sort of career than the miserable existence which was his as a legitimate actor. So he just emphasized his incongruities. His make-up as Hamlet was so excruciatingly funny, that the late E. A. Sothern, father of the present star of the same name, copied all of his characteristics and mannerisms, and made the greatest success of his later career in the title role of "The Crushed Tragedian." This play ran for a year at the Park Theatre, at 22d Street and Broadway.

"Count Joannes," however, took every possible advantage of all this sport. He could pack a theatre to its capacity at high prices, and he used to say that the public was paying him well for its fun.

Once when playing Romeo to the Juliet of a Miss "Pavonia" Fairbanks, the two provided so much amusement that a riot was imminent. Miss Fairbanks

was a very handsome girl, but wholly free from anything that could suggest knowledge of the stage. In the balcony scene some one in the gallery cried out, "Oh, George!" another bellowed, "Pavonia, do give George a kiss!" still another suggested that Juliet "take the Pavonia Ferry"; and finally the stage was strewn with cabbage heads. During all this racket not a word spoken on the stage could be heard. Jones, however, came to the centre of the footlights. He picked up one of the cabbage heads, and, addressing the audience, said in a low, tragic voice: "Oh, cabbage head, gaze upon your brothers!" This brought on some real applause, and at the close of the act the leading members of the cast were called before the curtain, for it must be remembered that the best actors were often found in support of these travestical stars. One of these—a sterling actor named Robert Johnston—started to address the audience in resentment of the degrading spectacle in which he was forced to figure. Jones rushed up to him and cried out loudly: "How dare you address the audience where I am the star?"

The audience just howled at this, but Johnston's sonorous voice was heard above all the rest as he responded:

"Well, if you are the star, it is but fair that you should catch all the missiles."

Another "freak" star was James Owen O'Connor, and he was indeed a festive tragedian. He was wealthy, and as long as he lived, was enabled to prosper; but he lacked the seriousness which made the vogue of the "count" so prolific. O'Connor gradually reached the lower-class theatres. He never understood, like Jones, that he was regarded as a joke; and

this fact prevented him from enjoying equal prosperity. O'Connor died rich, but he was a man of means before he became "a tragic star."

The Cherry Sisters were four girls from Iowa. They were just a quartette of incompetents, and were so indifferent as to their reception by the public, that they were in demand for many years, at a salary far higher than would have been accorded them if they had possessed real ability. There was, though, something approaching cruelty in the spectacle which these poor females presented, night after night, in exhibiting their crudities to howling, insulting audiences. It is, nevertheless, to be regretted that a truthful statement of the facts necessitates the recording here of the almost unbelievable instance where these four girls were paid \$1,000 a week at a time when hundreds of worthy and accepted public favorites, who would have been glad to receive one-tenth of this sum, were unable to receive consideration.

The present vogue of the "amateur night" is of vastly different character. The performers are actually paid, and not all are found wanting, though an effort is made to uncover "foolish Thespians." This has resulted in the better class of theatres eliminating the "amateur night" from their programmes, but in their place have come thousands of lower-grade houses, and these devote one and often two nights a week to this species of entertainment.

Hundreds of worthy acts, too, have been first discovered at one of these functions. So true is this that a tendency to change the character of the whole procedure is in evidence, and now instead of the "amateur night" we have, or rather are gradually to have, the "weekly try out night," which is a function character-

ized with some dignity and none of the disgraceful incidents of the older affair.

The one man to make a business of providing the "turns" for the "amateur night" is Mortimer Kaphan. He has, for about two decades, been offering his services as the successor of Booth and Forest, and, doubtless, the manner in which he was received has suggested to him the wisdom of entering this field on a wholesale scale. At any rate, he certainly has unearthed the "real thing" for the purveyor of this tomfoolery, and has supplied the talent for hundreds of the theatres where the receipts on "amateur night" are so large as to justify the managers to add to their weekly outlay a considerable sum to compensate Mr. Kaphan and his colleagues for their efforts.

The "weekly try-out," as now conducted under such dignified and earnest showmen as William Fox, Marcus Loew and William Gane, is gradually developing into a serious and interesting proposition, where the majority of the offerings are found to possess possibilities for perpetuity.



The various methods of giving publicity to stage offerings, have had their share of progress, both as to form and cost of maintenance. Forty years ago, William Paulding, known at that time as the "Boss of the Bill Posters," held managers in a state of subjection, with what was seemingly thought to be a monopoly. John Mahon was Paulding's rival, and the two were supposed to control the bill boards of New York City; the cost at this period was three cents a sheet for posting, and no extra charge for the use of the boards.

In these days boards that to-day would bring a

revenue of one hundred dollars a week for their use, were available for the asking; at most a few tickets supplied by the manager would be sufficient to place the best of locations at the disposal of the bill poster. Three-sheet boards were to be found on Broadway at every turn. Twenty-five dollars would be a fair estimate of the cost for a weekly bill posting of every description. Still, these were troublous times, and Czar Paulding was wont to collect his bills with a warrant more often than not.

All this is changed now. The price per sheet for posting, it is true, is but one cent higher than in the Paulding era; but good locations cost anywhere from five to ten dollars each per week, according to the value and size of the board. Three-sheet boards are relegated to obscure places. In recent years, pictorial posters have been practically abandoned in the larger cities, and are used in New York only for the outlying theatres, such as the Grand Opera House, City Theatre, and the West End.

The advent of the one-cent newspaper and the advance in the intellectuality of the layman, have brought about wholly new conditions in the advertising world. The tendency being to adhere to the maxim that "He who runs may read." Therefore, the plays and amusements of this period are advertised with type printing instead of the more costly lithographic displays of a less enlightened age.

One man's influence has brought about great changes in the last few years, however. O. J. Gude, to whose efforts the phrase, "The Great White Way," owes its coinage, has perpetuated the old-time bill posting business into a vast corporation, which has millions of dollars invested in modern and ingenious

facilities for attracting the attention of the "passer-by."

It is an amazing fact that the signboard is paying to the property holders of the borough of Manhattan alone, five per cent on more than ten millions of dollars for that which was formerly a non-existent value.

Mr. Gude originated the permanent signboard which is used for painted advertising instead of paper printing, and the enormity of the scope of his operations in this field caused this "Napoleon of publicity" to embrace the electric sign. The latter has come into such general use that theatrical managers are at this time considering the adoption of this mode of publicity, upon a scale which may mean the obliteration of the poster for all time. The writer believes, though, that as the electric sign is effective only after dark, the older methods will prevail to a reduced extent.

O. J. Gude is a factor in all the advertising facilities in Greater New York at this time. He is the president of the O. J. Gude Company, the treasurer of the Van Buren Bill Posting Company, and also of the New York Bill Posting Company. Verily, the changes since the days of "Boss" Paulding have not been retrogressive.



The various forms which the art of Terpsichore has taken in a single generation, are not without interest. It was in Jarrett and Palmer's first production of "The Black Crook" that American audiences first began to rave over the toe dancer. The vogue of Bonfanti and Morlachi was indeed prolonged; Bonfanti is still alive; in her prime she was wedded to one of the Hoffman boys, a well-known banker who provided the capital

for Charles Fechter's regime at what is now the Fourteenth Street Theatre. Morlachi was the wife of W. H. Omnohundo, "Texas Jack."

After these came the famous Kiralfy family, consisting of three brothers and three sisters, who set New York literally crazy with their unique dancing creations. Imre Kiralfy is wealthy, and still presents gigantic spectacles in Europe; Bolossy is called upon in America to this day to provide similar pageantry for the big expositions; Arnold, who died a few years ago, confined himself to dancing and teaching, and was not less gifted than his brothers. The Kiralfy sisters retired from the stage before their ability to entrance audiences had deserted them; one married A. L. Parkes, a prominent newspaper man who was long the dramatic critic of the "New York Mercury"; another is Mrs. Edmund Gerson.

Twenty years ago George Edwardes sent to America his first London Gayety Theatre Company, headed by Nellie Farren and Fred Leslie. In this organization were two dainty dancers, Letty Lynd and Sylvia Grey. These two introduced the famous gayety type of skirt dance, which had a vogue of nearly ten years, lasting up to the time, when Loie Fuller who had been fairly successful as a comedienne, created a furore at the Casino in an operetta, entitled "L'Oncle Celestin."

This was the commencement of the era of the serpentine dancer; no other form of Terpsichore ever profited so many as that of La Loie's diaphanous twirl, though she who created it, at least as far as her own country is concerned, fared perhaps the least of all; her emulators prospered, though not one of them ever gave Miss Fuller any credit. They would hie them-

selves to Paris, where the originator was ever regarded as an artistic genius, and as fast as La Loie would create novelties, these petticoated pirates would rush to America, giving a verbatim copy, so that, when Loie came here herself, the novelty was over; but let it not be said that there ever was a real rival to Loie Fuller.

The "art" dancer has come forward in the last five years or so, the impression being that Isidora Duncan was the originator of the present craze for dancing to the music of the great masters. Maude Allan, because of her great success in London is perhaps regarded as the leading exponent, but neither Miss Duncan nor Miss Allan can be credited with pioneering that art, for it was Ruth St. Denis who first found favor abroad in classical dances to the accompaniment of orchestral numbers. Miss St. Denis, in fact, antedates all of the others by several years, if the writer is correct in his arithmetic.

As "Ruth," Miss St. Denis was a favorite of vaudeville in the early 90's, and even then her ambition knew no bounds; "Ruth" also gave very nearly the same class of dance that she now is seen in at the Hudson Theatre five or six years before either Miss Duncan or Miss Allan were heard of as public dancers. It is but fair that this statement should be recorded in view of the interest shown in this form of entertainment to-day. And yet, this latest craze does not seem to possess the elements of sustained interest desired by its exponents, nor can it be said that even the surroundings of a symphony orchestra and the selection of the scores of the world's greatest masters will overcome, for any great length of time, the suggestive, if not questionable type of costume—or shall I say the lack

of such? which, after all, is the basic element by which these wholly unknown "dancers" had come to their fame.

The spectacle of Maud Allan, appearing at Carnegie Hall to an audience, representing \$4,000 at a matinee, with women predominating in the assemblage, may have been accomplished through artistic ideals; but a careful observer at any of these functions would easily form the impression that sensationalism was the incentive of the management and the attraction as well from a box office point of view.

So palpable is this that our music halls have been practically sustained the past season by various "classical" dancers who have come into fame and a large salary, without the slightest ability displayed, other than to compete with each other as to who could evolve a more daring exhibition of nudity. This state of affairs is nothing more than a return to the era of "the living picture" which Matt Morgan, a painter of renown, brought into being a generation ago, and which caused the authorities to descend on the theatres and end the regime in the height of its prosperity. New York is the one great Mecca for this sort of thing in America, and the final result is always to create a desire for the pure article, in fact, the season was not survived by the "art" dancer, whereas, toward its close, there came a veritable furore for the genuine Terpsichorean artiste.

Mlle. Dazie is a distinct illustration of the truth of the foregoing statement. Originally a toe dancer of great dexterity, she was taken in hand by Mark Luescher and Louis Werba and surrounded with an air of mystery under the nom de théâtre of "La Domino Rouge." The methods used, principally by

Mr. Luescher, were effective in making this talented dancer emerge from almost obscurity to international fame; and her earnings for a limited time were prodigious. But the vogue was of decidedly short duration. Her really artistic and dainty toe dancing attracted the attention of Oscar Hammerstein, and she again became Mlle. Dazie at the Manhattan Opera House, where she was the distinguishing feature of the second season of opera at that establishment. Dazie will prosper long after the "art" dancer is forgotten; the fact, that in the past year she has developed great ability as a pantomimist has added to her value.

Mlle. Genée demonstrated vividly that sensationalism was not a necessity, for she has been able to sustain her vogue in America a second season, despite the fact that the vehicle used as a frame for her exquisite art, was about as hopeless as could be well imagined. Genée came, too, before the "art" dancer and will be found a potent attraction long after the "Allans" and "Duncans" have left the scene.

The most extraordinary triumph ever achieved in the Terpsichorean field was that of the Russian dancers at the Metropolitan Opera House and the New Theatre in the winter of 1910. Two agile and remarkable performers, Mlle. Pavlowa and M. Mordkin, were able to reduce the deficit at the Metropolitan Opera House to a minimum in a single month, and at the New Theatre it was the attraction of these two that, toward the end of the season, made possible the only sold-out houses, recorded for grand opera in that worthy edifice.

That the dancing evolutions of two artists, hitherto unknown to fame, outside of Russia, should serve to

draw the public en masse to grand opera representations, where a \$5-a-seat scale of prices prevailed, is perhaps the most unique and noteworthy achievement of the year in which it occurred. The result will be a plethora of Russian dancers in the coming year. Every impresario, and all of our music hall magnates have been scouring the resources of Eastern Europe in the hope that they may find worthy rivals of Pavlowa and Mordkin. If they succeed, the outcome will hardly be what is sought; for experience has shown that where too many "wonders" are unearthed, the public relaxes in its enthusiasm, even in the instance of the originals themselves.

Miss Bessie Clayton's career also illustrates the survival of the legitimate danseuse over her temporary rivals. In the days of Charles Hoyt's musical farces, Miss Clayton stood out as a decidedly conspicuous feature; in fact, the great run of "A Trip to Chinatown" at the old Madison Square Theatre was greatly sustained by this agile artiste's remarkable toe dancing. Miss Clayton is unique in that she also possesses talent as an actress. To-day she is as potent as ever, while her capacity for financial remuneration has increased five hundred per cent since the Hoyt era.



The great success of Laura Hope Crews at the Garrick Theatre in Henry Miller's production of "Her Husband's Wife," is interesting for the reason that Miss Crews is the fourth of the lady members of the Murray Hill Theatre Stock Company of 1900, to reach an eminent position in her chosen profession.

The Murray Hill Theatre housed the last of the old

time, hard-working stock companies. Henry V. Donnelly, who passed away in 1910, conceived the idea of organizing a small, but useful company, which gave two performances daily and changed the play each week.

The enterprise was maintained several years, seemingly with success. All of the players were unknown to fame at the outset, except Mr. Donnelly himself. Frances Starr played petite roles; Dorothy Donnelly would play the "lead" one week and utility the next. Alice Johnson assumed forty important characters in a single season, ranging from Lady Macbeth to Peggy in "A Tin Soldier." Miss Crews began in an unimportant way, but soon won fame.

The methods used by Mr. Donnelly may have been old-fashioned, and would perhaps hardly do in these days, but here were developed the careers of four actresses whom I have named, and who now hold a conspicuous place in our best theatres.

Occasionally Donnelly would emulate the old stock star plan, and Elita Proctor Otis there gave her remarkable portrayal of Nancy Sykes.

The first revelation of the divine spark in Nance O'Neill came at this same playhouse, while theatre-goers of this generation had then the only opportunity of witnessing the consummate art of Daniel Bandmann as Shylock.

All of these stars appeared twice daily, yet the performances were well-nigh perfect. At distant intervals a critic would timidly hie himself hither; he came to scoff, but always remained to praise.

The subject is of interest as representing the final effort to maintain an art establishment with old traditions as the basic standard. We know, too, that four

such careers as those possessed by the ladies I have named, could only have emanated from just such methods as were pursued by the late Henry V. Donnelly.



The chorus girl has been no insignificant quantity in the scheme of American amusements. Her vogue is not of the ancient vintage, for a quarter of a century ago, the "Merry, Merry" were confined to comparatively few organizations.

French Opera Bouffe brought the chorus lady first into prominence in this country, and it is recalled that the late Maurice Grau found it anything but business sagacity to bring hither the handsome chorister, now so necessary for success; in fact, on one occasion he discovered that the possession of so many pretty Parisiennes in his chorus was a serious menace to his plans. This happened in Havana and Mexico, where handsome women are a rarity. The impresario had the greatest difficulty in maintaining his entourage, owing to the fact that the majority of his dames de choeur were either content to remain in those lucrative lands, or else they were kidnapped by wealthy Cubans or Mexicans. This interesting incident may account for the unattractive and somewhat mature coterie of foreign choristers for which the Metropolitan Opera House was famous in the days of the Abbey and Grau regime.

"Pinafore," that first of the Gilbert and Sullivan operettas, was the means of bringing about the era of the American chorus girl, and she has given a good account of herself in the quarter of a century which has passed since that delicious satire began her vogue.

The chorus man has also had a share in the general progress.

Lillian Russell, while not exactly a chorus girl, was not far removed from that distinction, when she began her career in "Pinafore." Marie Dressler began in the chorus, so did Della Fox, while Pauline Hall sang in the chorus of Alice Oates' Opera Company, long before the "Pinafore" craze was inaugurated; Raymond Hitchcock started in the chorus of a cheap opera company. Frank Howe, Jr., who manages two of Philadelphia's most important theatres, was a member of the Chicago Church Choir Company, and afterward became its manager. Mr. Howe was the first to produce the "Mikado" in America.

Sadie Martinot was an "extra" girl at the Eagle Theatre in this city under "Josh" Hart; Marie Cahill sang in the chorus for several years; Carrie De Mar (Mrs. Joseph Hart) answered an advertisement for extra local choristers in a Philadelphia newspaper and began her career in the Grand Opera House in that city, not so very long ago, where her grace and piquancy, as well as her ability as a danseuse was quickly discovered; and Fanny McIntyre was a "Mikado" girl.

Lindsay Morrison, long the able manager of the Castle Square Theatre in Boston, and lately manager of the Boston and Orpheum Theatres in that city, was discovered by the writer in Chicago, where he sang in the chorus in a stock opera company more than twenty-five years ago. The same may be said of Robert Hickman. Fanny Rice began also in the chorus. William H. Currie, a well-known manager and former partner of George Broadhurst, sang in the chorus of

"La Mascotte" in a big Brooklyn tent, under the management of this writer in 1885.

Virginia Earle was a casino front row girl in the days of Rudolph Aronson; Alice Johnson began in a light opera chorus, so did Edna May and Madge Lessing. Julia Marlowe was a "pinafore" product. She sang in a juvenile company, which gave the opera under "Bob" Miles' management. In this organization was also Sallie Cohen (Mrs. John C. Rice). Arthur and Jenny Dunn were prominent in Haverly's Children "Pinafore" Company.

Thomas W. Riley, now a prominent manager of musical plays, was one of the original "tigers" in Henry E. Dixey's production of "Adonis." Mr. Dixey himself composed the forelegs of the heifer in Edward E. Rice's "Evangeline," an American operetta, which has brought more worthy talent forward than any single vehicle known to the writer. The hindlegs of the heifer were represented by the late Richard Golden, a comedian of great ability, but who seemed to escape his just goal in some inexplicable manner.

The writer cannot permit the subject of Edward E. Rice to pass without a tribute to his unparalleled service. To him many stars now in the height of their sway, owe practically all that they have achieved. Among these are William H. Crane, Nat C. Goodwin, Richard Mansfield and Digby Bell. But the number is too numerous for repetition here. It was Rice who brought Stuart Robson and William H. Crane together in Leonard Grover's "Our Boarding House." At present Mr. Rice is managing the production of "The Skylark" for H. B. Harris, and in view of his everlasting optimism, one may well wonder, as to what he will

yet bring to the surface, for his activity is unbounded. If a monument were in order to any living man for worthy effort and for unselfish achievement in the field of the theatre, to none could the honor come more gracefully than to Edward Evergreen Rice.

Returning to the chorus girl; in Mr. Rice's period of activity she was accorded much opportunity for advancement, for Rice had a way of providing an incentive for ambition; furthermore, he possessed one quality which managers of this day might well cultivate, though that would mean a sacrifice on their part. Rice developed the talent of his choristers to such a palpable extent that their rise in the ranks soon became a menace to his own interests, yet he was ever willing to see these better their condition, even though it meant the loss to himself of their services. It is difficult to recall a "Rice Girl" who remained in "the Merry, Merry" for any length of time.

Some day a writer may find profitable employment in the recital of Rice's achievements in this respect, a volume would be necessary to do justice to the subject, and the number of stars and celebrities who began with Rice in a humble capacity, would disclose an amazing total.

The Rice methods, however, have been perpetuated in many other respects. Klaw and Erlanger, in their production of "Liberty Belles," gathered together an array of talented and pretty girls whose potency became so evident that the era of the "Show Girl" was created, and ever since the distinction between the latter species and the chorus girl was clearly drawn.

Among the dozen or more show girls in "Liberty Belles" were Lotta Faust, Elsie Ferguson and Augusta Glose, and all have reached stardom. The

first named was approaching great fame, when her sad demise was recorded.



In the previous volume it was observed that the indications at the time of issue of that work pointed to a general acceptance of our native stars and musicians all over the world, and that at no distant day American audiences and the American Press would hail the achievements of our own struggling artists.

Albert Spalding, a year ago, was appearing simultaneously with Mischa Elman, a foreign virtuoso of about the same age and calibre as his American confrere.

The public sentiment at the time perhaps favored the foreigner, and the writer recorded his impression that the greatest living violinist would, in another decade, be found in one of the two above named. The writer also felt constrained to predict that Spalding's career would gradually develop his supremacy, and it seems that we have been quite as much justified in this prophecy as in others made in the earlier volume; Spalding is carrying everything before him on his lengthy tour of Continental Europe. In Russia, particularly, has this American boy been acclaimed as one of the world's greatest musicians.

It will be a glorious era that, which records many such achievements, for Spalding is not alone; we have others whose careers have been so prolonged in our country, that we realize not their superiority.

If Maud Powell spent more of her time in Europe, she would hold a higher place in the estimation of American people. Miss Powell goes on year after year like the illustrious Camilla Urso, appearing be-

fore practically the same audiences in the same cities, always reaching a higher plane; yet considering her superb artistry and the stability and diginty, which always have characterized her appearances, she is not here accorded the distinction that would be hers in the critical centres of Europe.

Teresa Carreno, while not an American, has spent so much of her artistic career in this country, that she is practically regarded as a home product; but New York hears much too little of this gifted pianiste. It is recalled that in the 70's Carreno was quite as potent an attraction in the Nilsson concerts, as was the famous Swedish soprano herself; and who of us that were permitted to hear the recitals, which Teresa Carreno gave in conjunction with Emile Sauret, will deny that even then, thirty-five years ago, she was without a rival? This is stated with a full appreciation of the gifts possessed by Mmes. Essipoff and Aus Der Ohe, whose careers began and progressed almost on parallel lines with the Spanish virtuoso of whom I write. To-day Carreno is matured, unquestionably the greatest living pianiste, but she is not a fad; New York hears her rarely; it is almost inexplicable.

And what of Joseffy? Rubinstein himself said that Raphael Joseffy was the most worthy artist at the piano that he had heard. This was in the 70's. Joseffy has been in this country ever since; when he does play, which is at very rare intervals, he carries his hearers off their feet. But there is that something lacking to his career; perhaps it is the man and his domesticity. He prefers to keep out of the limelight. There can be no other explanation at least as to why he is not one of the greatest attractions from a musical viewpoint in the world.

CHAPTER XIII

LIEBLER AND COMPANY, THE GREAT INSTITUTION OVER WHICH GEORGE C. TYLER PRESIDES—MARTIN BECK, AND HIS DISCIPLE, MARK A. LUESCHER—FREDERIC SHIPMAN.

To come to a realization of the degree in which unusual efficiency in all departments can contribute to the general artistic effect, one has only to turn to the achievements of Liebler and Company, a managerial firm in which, perhaps more than any other, the departmental lines are finely drawn.

The keen observer of things theatrical needs no introduction to this firm of Liebler & Co. To him the stamp of that firm means a play very well worth while, most excellently acted, effectively staged in the best of taste, and in all ways deserving of commendation, whether the piece produced hits the fancy or no. The firm is now some fourteen years old, having sprung from the partnership formed between Theodore A. Liebler, a sterling business man, and, George C. Tyler, a showman of experience, to star the late Charles Coghlan in his own version of Dumas' Kean, which he called "The Royal Box." This was in 1897. Liebler's art printing establishment had some time before been wiped away by the Park Place disaster, in which he was the chief sufferer, while Tyler had met with theatrical reverses, so that the financial backing of the first Liebler and Company venture may best be

described as of conservative proportions. After a week of one-night stands, prospects for ultimate success were so far from brilliant that some of the members of the company were contemplating sending in their notices for fear "the ghost would not walk," etc. A foreign star had contracted for the Fifth Avenue Theatre in New York for a season of six weeks, but found her reception so luke-warm that she brought her engagement to an abrupt end. Mr. Liebler induced the manager of the house, Mr. Knowles, who was at a loss to find a suitable attraction to fill the time thus left vacant, and who had heard of the clamor of the infant firm for a chance to make good in New York, to book Mr. Charles Coghlan and "The Royal Box" in the Fifth Avenue Theatre with results that are still green in the memory of three theatre-goers out of four.

To cap the success of "The Royal Box," Liebler & Company's second production proved to be the most profitable theatrical venture ever indulged in in this or any other country up to that time. As soon as Mr. Coghlan's play had placed the firm on a financial basis, arrangements were entered into by which the most popular American actress of that time, Miss Viola Allen, then leading woman of the Empire Theatre Company, became a Liebler and Company star. For some time the managers were in doubt whether to present their new star in a dramatic version of Longfellow's "Courtship of Miles Standish" or a dramatization of Hall Caine's "The Christian," if one could be secured. After several days cabling and the payment of a large sum of money, an option on the play was secured. Upon receipt of the MMS. they found that it was not only one of the gloomiest of Hall Caine's plays with an unhappy ending, but that the

star part was for a man "John Storm." After some debate Miss Allen, however, was sent to the Isle of Man to visit the writer, bringing him her own ideas together with those of her managers on the subject, and after a few months of collaboration she returned with an almost entirely new manuscript of the play. Even after that Mr. Tyler made many alterations before that play was fully produced.

It is said that Mr. Caine has derived, in author's royalties from the play "The Christian," a good bit over a quarter of million dollars. The managers' profits must have reached a stupendous sum. Suffice it to say that from the time "The Christian" was first produced Messrs. Liebler and Company have conducted operations on foundations of prosperity. Even though, at times, their artistic endeavors have resulted in financial losses that would have bankrupted most managers, they have never been seriously inconvenienced.

To detail their achievements from the time of the production of "The Christian" is a difficult task. Their third production was of Sydney Grundy's version of "The Musketeers," in which James O'Neill was d'Artagnan, Blanche Bates, Milady; Wilton Lackaye, Athos; Margaret Anglin, Constance; and Henry Lee, Francis Carlyle, S. Miller Kent, Judith Beroalde, Edmund Breese, and Jaques Kruger had important parts. By this time, Liebler and Company had already contracted the habit of getting together fine companies, for besides Viola Allen, "The Christian" organization had included the late Edward Morgan, John Mason, Jameson Lee Finney and Frank Keenan.

The following season saw only one new Liebler and Company production, but that a notable one. It was

Israel Zangwill's "The Children of the Ghetto," the play that aroused a storm of criticism in two continents. Wilton Lackaye, Blanche Bates, Frank Worthing, Mabel Taliaferro, (her first big hit) William Norris, Richard Carle, Ada Dwyer, Mme. Cottrelly and Adolphe Lestina were in the fine caste, and the play was staged under the supervision of an artist no less than the late James A. Herne. This was the first of Mr. Zangwill's plays produced by this firm, which now practically has first call on his dramatic output.

In the fourth season of the firm's activity, a number of important productions were made. The late James A. Herne appeared in his last play "Sag Harbor," in which William Hodge first came into prominence, and the two daughters of the lamented actor-dramatist were also conspicuous. Miss Allen was given her second stellar vehicle (though "The Christian" was still being performed with other stars), F. Marion Crawford's "In the Palace of the King." Eben Plympton gave her fine support in this, as did William Norris, Robert Haines, Edgar Davenport, and the stately Marcia Van Dresser. James O'Neill spent the greater part of the season at the Academy of Music in the most sumptuous revival of "Monte Cristo" ever given O'Neill's old-stand-by, and Mrs. LeMoynes was also launched as a star. But far more important was the acquisition of Eleanor Robson, who figured in a production of "Unleavened Bread," and was then associated with Otis Skinner and Mrs. LeMoynes in a production of Browning's "In a Balcony," the first of the great English poet's plays to be given in this country at a financial profit, and the forerunner of a truly remarkable series of "all-star" revivals to be made under the direction of this firm.

The fifth season (1901-2) since the inception of Liebler and Company was marked by the first importation of Mrs. Patrick Campbell, the first of their many foreign stars, and her remarkable success; the return to this country of the handsome Kyrle Bellew, in a dramatization of "A Gentleman of France," in which he had Eleanor Robson for a leading woman, and John Blair, Ada Dwyer, Charlotte Walker, Edgar Selwyn, John Flood, Howell Hansell and other good people as coadjutors; and an all-star revival of Sheridan Knowle's "The Hunchback" with Viola Allen, Eben Plympton, Aubrey Boucicault and Jameson Lee Finney; to say nothing of a fine matinee performance of "The School for Scandal" with Bellew, Morgan and Marie Wainwright, and several minor productions.

In 1902-3, Liebler and Company brought to this country Eleanor Duse, with what is said to have been the finest company of Italian actors ever gathered together. In addition, they presented Viola Allen in Hall Caine's "The Eternal City," with incidental music written especially by Mascagni, and with Ed. Morgan, E. M. Holland and Frederic de Belleville in the cast. Eleanor Robson was made into a full-fledged star in "Audrey," and then was the Juliet in a revival of the Veronese tragedy that capped the events of the season, in which Bellew was Romeo, Plympton Mercutio, W. H. Thompson the friar, while Edwin Arden, John E. Kellard, Ada Dwyer, W. J. Ferguson, Edmund Breese, Forrest Robinson the late George Clarke, Mrs. W. G. Jones, and the late Frank C. Bangs were in the company. Her Juliet was a thing to be remembered.

The following year was made conspicuous in the history of this firm by the joint starring tour of Ada Rehan and Otis Skinner, which resulted in some fine

Shakesperian performances. Also this was the year of three great financial successes, Eleanor Robson in "Merely Mary Ann" Kyrle Bellew in "Raffles," and "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch." To wind up a season so fruitful, Liebler and Company and a number of other managers joined hands in producing "The Two Orphans," with Clara Morris, Kyrle Bellew, Grace George, the late Charles Warner, James O'Neill, Margaret Illington, E. M. Holland, Frederick Perry, Annie Irish, Jameson Lee Finney, Elita Proctor Otis and Clara Blandick in the cast. The following season Liebler and Company alone took this fine production on tour, presenting the old play with a cast that included Clara Morris, Grace George, Mrs. LeMoyne, Elita Proctor Otis, Sarah Traux, Bijou Fernandez, James O'Neill, Louis James, J. E. Dodson, Jameson Lee Finney, and William Beach. This was one of the strongest organizations that ever made an all season's tour of the country.

As one proceeds with an account of the doings of this theatrical firm, one fairly loses oneself in the revel of big names and ambitious undertakings. In 1904-5 Liebler and Company imported the famous Frenchwoman, Gabrielle Rejane, produced Shaw's "You Never Can Tell," and brought over one of the cleverest of English-speaking comediennes, Ellis Jeffreys. Besides the road company in "The Two Orphans" mentioned above, the firm made two important all-star revivals, one of Boucicault's "London Assurance" with Miss Jeffreys, Eben Plympton, W. H. Thompson, James Neil, Ida Conquest, Joseph Wheelock, Jr., and four clever English people, Ben Webster, Murray Carson, Herbert Sleath, and Kate Phillips, the other of "She Stoops to Conquer," with Eleanor Robson

as Kate, Kyrle Bellew as Marlow, and Louis James, J. E. Dodson, Sydney Drew, Mrs. Calvert, Isabel Irving and Frank Mills in the other roles.

Then came the year in which "The Prodigal Son" was produced with the biggest cast that ever presented a new play in recent years—Morgan, Aubrey Boucicault, W. H. Thompson, J. E. Dodson, Charlotte Walker, Drina de Wolfe, Marie Wainwright, Henry Bergman, Ben Webster and Ida Waterman were in it—Edwin Milton Royle's "The Squaw Man" was first performed, "The Vanderbilt Cup" with its wonderful auto race, was staged and Ellis Jeffreys came to grief in Sutro's "The Fascinating Mrs. Vandervelt."

In 1906-7 Eleanor Robson spent the entire season at the Liberty Theatre, New York, presenting in turn, Zangwill's "Nurse Marjorie," Jerome K. Jerome's "Susan in Search of a Husband," Clyde Fitch's "The Girl Who Has Everything," and Armstrong's "Salomy Jane." Her company included the handsome Englishman H. B. Warner, Isabel Irving, Ada Dwyer, the late Ruben Fax, Holbrook Blinn, Earle Browne and little Donald Gallaher. After an early failure, Ellis Jeffreys was co-starred with W. H. Crane in "She Stoops to Conquer" under the joint management of Liebler and Company and Charles Frohman, the supporting cast including George Giddens, a rare English comedian, as Tony Lumpkin, and Margaret Dale, Walter Hale, Herbert Sleath and Fanny Addison Pitt. Towards the close of that season Liebler and Company secured the services of that young genius, Walker Whiteside.

The year following, (1907-8) "The Man From Home" achieved its sensational record of running a year in Chicago, Mrs. Patrick Campbell returned to

America under Liebler & Company management, producing, among other things, "Electra," in which she had the support of Mrs. Beerbohm Tree, and after a few years of separation, Viola Allen rejoined the firm's forces, appearing in "Irene Wycherley."

Then came two seasons, those just completed, which may be said to mark the beginning of a new epoch in the history of the firm. With the exception of Zangwill's "The Melting Pot" a play of America, for America if not by an American, not one of the many fine plays produced but was of native authorship. What Liebler and Company have done for the American playwright in recent years is almost incalculable. By insisting upon big themes in the plays that they have produced, such as Mrs. Burnett's "The Dawn of a To-morrow," Cleveland Moffett's "The Battle" C. M. S. MacLellan's "Judith Zaraine," and plays of like calibre, they have encouraged dramatists to put virility, backbone, and ideas into their plays, and have thus influenced for the better the character of the American play. What is more, they have been instrumental in winning fresh recruits for the drama from other fields of literature, and in bringing forward the best that was in unknown strugglers in the field. They were directly responsible for the dramatic partnership of Booth Tarkington and Harry Leon Wilson, that produced "The Man From Home" and "Cameo Kirby," for the collaboration of Joseph Medill Patterson and Harriet Ford, that resulted in "The Fourth Estate" and "A Little Brother of the Rich," and the mating of the wits of Frank Ward O'Malley and Edw. W. Townsend brought forth "A Certain Party." They persuaded the late F. Marion Crawford to put his "The White Sister" into dramatic form, and it is said that

they have induced O. Henry to turn dramatist. At any rate, Armstrong's "Alias Jimmy Valentine" is founded on an O. Henry story. They discovered Cleveland Moffett and induced Henry Blossom to abandon the writing of comic opera libretti for the construction of plays. O. Henry died in 1910. He left a posthumous play which Liebler & Co. will produce.

As a result of their vigorous campaign in favor of the American drama, Liebler and Company now own the rights to a number of successes of native origin that will insure their prosperity for many seasons to come. Their stars include Viola Allen, Gertrude Elliott, Margaret Anglin, Walker Whiteside, William Hodge, Wilton Lackaye, the Farnums, Mabel Hite, H. B. Warner, and several others, and their immediate plans include the presentation of Bessie Abbott, the American-born prima donna of the Paris Opera, in an opera written especially for her by Pietro Mascagni, the composer of "Cavalleria Rusticana," who will himself come over to conduct the performances. Important new plays by Zangwill, Hall Caine, and half a dozen of the leading American dramatists are also in prospect.

In the last analysis first credit for this extraordinary showing goes to George C. Tyler, the managing director of the firm. Of Tyler, his excellent judgment, his keen instincts and remarkable attainments, much has been said and written. He is indeed, a "self-made" man, for, in his fourteenth year he became so filled with the wanderlust that he left his Ohio home to make a fortune, never entering a schoolroom again, except as a distinguished visitor. As his father was an editor, it is natural that his first endeavors should have been turned towards the making of newspapers

and he was successively, printer, reporter, dramatic editor, press agent, and full-fledged showman. In the latter capacity he proved a veritable genius, though he would be the first to profess his lamentable inexperience in matters of money. It is this in Tyler, and Liebler's happy faculties in financial management that makes their partnership so felicitous. Yet, doubtless, the ability of the men the heads of the firm have put in charge of the various departments of their concern has contributed tremendously to the success of their endeavors.

The secondary departments in the concerns are as follows: the stage department, the construction department, the scenic department, the costume department, the booking department and the press (or publicity) department. As a connecting link between them all is Mr. Tyler's father, George H. Tyler, who is office manager. Of the departments the stage department is most important. At its head, at present, is Hugh Ford, a master of his craft, who surely has no two equals as a stage director to-day. Mr. Ford was virtually a Liebler & Co. discovery, having been the stage director of the Proctor popular-priced stock companies in New York City, previous to succeeding Eugene Presbrey as general stage director for the Liebler & Co. attractions.

One has but to recall the staging of some recent plays entrusted to his care: "The Prodigal Son," "The Vanderbilt Cup," "The Squaw Man," "The Bishop's Carriage," "The Tenement Tragedy," "Salomy Jane," "Alias Jimmy Valentine," "The Dawn of a Tomorrow," "The Battle," "The White Sister," "The Melting Pot," "The Fourth Estate," "The Man from

Home"—to name the most important out of half a hundred—to realize the extent of his skill.

The construction department of Liebler & Co. is the best equipped in the profession. It occupies a huge building on 22d Street, and there every last detail of a production is attended to, save for the painting of scenery, the making of costumes, and the purchase of such properties as they cannot make themselves. The scenery is painted in the studios of Gates & Morange, considered by Liebler & Co. the best all-around painters in America, and whose work for the government at the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition attracted so much attention. The costume department is in charge of Sarah Bolwell, a wardrobe woman of much experience, whose recollections of stars whom she has clothed would fill an entertaining book. The booking department, of which George Welty is head, and the Press Department, with W. W. Aulick in charge, aided by Theodore A. Liebler, Jr., are complete in every detail. The Liebler & Co. Press Department is peculiar to itself in that it is the only theatrical office in the country which sends out daily and newsy news of attractions. There has not been a day in several years when the name of Liebler & Co. has been absent from the columns of the New York papers, and in this way the firm name has been built into a valuable trademark. Liebler & Co. now occupy a floor of offices in the handsome Gattle Building at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Thirty-eighth Street, and will probably remain there until the completion of their new theatre now planning, when the executive part of the establishment will be moved to their new home.



The advent of George Tyler as an impresario may well bear watching; it is not unlikely that this prince of producers has planned far beyond the Mascagni-Abott tour; no public caterer of this day has more worthy ambition than this untiring worker who last year made eighteen new productions. One may expect much from Tyler's first effort in opera, and if the fates are responsive for him in this enterprise, Oscar Hammerstein's successor will be no other than George C. Tyler!

If Tyler embraces grand opera, and he will, if he is encouraged at the outset, then will be inaugurated a campaign of competition between two factions of millionaires and multi-millionaires. In such a condition, Tyler would become the most important and the most active impresario of modern times. The signs do point in this direction. The situation always finds the man. Hammerstein has sold his right to present grand opera; a year or two at most will disclose his successor. The writer is pointing in the direction of George Tyler with a knowledge of his capacity, together with his artistic inclinations. He showed clearly in his conduct of the several tours of Eleanor Duse that he aspired high, only an accident prevented the American public from applauding once more through Tyler's efforts, the greatest actor the world ever saw—Tommaso Salvini—and it was he who arranged the details for the first American tour of that other illustrious Italian, Ermete Novelli.



Martin Beck has accomplished so much in the business department of the theatre that it is difficult to adequately recount his various achievements. With-

out doubt he is one of the most unique and at the same time conspicuous figures in the amusement world of to-day; admired by his associates, and respected by those who oppose him in a commercial way, for only a short time ago William Morris said: "Martin Beck is destined to be the 'King of Vaudeville of the World.'"

A glance through the executive offices of this active chief in New York City, gives the observing visitor an idea of Mr. Beck's principal qualification—and the one which more than any other, perhaps, accounts for the ease with which he dispatches large and varied interests—systematic organization. His headquarters are unlike any theatrical offices in the world, taking on the dignity and general appearance of a huge banking institution, rather than the booking and executive offices where the weekly amusement for half a million people is provided.

Every visitor is greeted with prompt and courteous attention, for the Orpheum's chief executives—who include M. Meyerfeld, Jr., the very astute president as well as Mr. Beck—do not believe in letting a matter rest upon the table for an indefinite period, but upon quick, fair and polite execution of each application and each problem as soon as they present themselves.

Not a little credit is due to these gentlemen for the selection of lieutenants, as each department is in charge of a most efficient head, and it is without the least hesitation or anxiety that Mr. Beck leaves his desk for months at a time to ramble through Europe in his racing automobile or seeking recreation in the pleasure resorts here at home, entirely out of communication with these lieutenants.

But whether actually at the helm of affairs or away, the Beck principles and methods are perceptible in every transaction, for his strong personality and the example he sets his large staff permeates the entire circuit.

Last year, when the Orpheum headquarters moved from the old St. James Building to the present luxuriant offices in the Putnam Building, Mr. Beck caused the following to be printed in the announcement notices, and it is repeated here for the reason that it typifies the keynote of the Orpheum Circuit's business conduct, and is entirely characteristic of its remarkable chief executive:

"We wanted, first of all, in making the change, to be more centrally located. We wanted to have room enough to breathe and fill our chests with good fresh air, so the work we do will reflect a healthy constitution; and, with plenty of space we can properly organize our forces, and do the more ambitious things we aim for.

"But, most of all, we wanted to make it cheerful and convenient for artists who apply for consideration. That has been the big thought, and in that respect we think our new headquarters will be found the most remarkable theatrical offices in the world.

"The watchword will be, 'with order, courtesy and dispatch.'"



Of the younger managers in theatricals there are few more popular and none more proficient in every branch of the profession than Mark A. Luescher, who at present holds an important position very close to Martin Beck, as that manager's personal representa-

tive, confidant and friend. I remember some years ago hearing A. L. Erlanger pay Mr. Luescher a nice compliment by referring to him as "the man who carries my messages to Garcia. If I want to assure myself that some important mission is quickly and intelligently dispatched without asking questions, I send for Mark."

That has been true of Mark A. Luescher's whole career, which has been one of wide variety; embracing every angle of the amusement business, and while he still is a young man, he has held high places and been in close communion with nearly all of the present-day theatrical generals. Still his life has not been without struggles and vicissitudes, for with the rapid, steady advancement in his profession, have come occasional heartaches and disappointments, all of which he overcame with dignity and honor, without losing through them a bit of his vigor and enterprise.

Of late years Mr. Luescher has frequently been referred to as the greatest of all exploiters of individual stars, and press agent par excellence. But he is more than this, for in the direction of affairs and in executive positions, he has shown himself to be an able and commanding young general.

Mr. Luescher first came to New York with Sam Shubert, who placed him at the Herald Square Theatre—their first New York house—as business manager. As the Shubert enterprises developed he was made the general representative, and it is no secret when I say that much of the Shuberts' popularity and expansion in the very beginning was due to this young man's courtesy, diplomacy and astute business direction of their affairs at this critical period. He soon attracted the notice of A. L. Erlanger, and after leav-

ing the Shuberts he was placed at the New Amsterdam Theatre as its manager, by Klaw & Erlanger. In all my experience I have never, before nor since, seen a theatre conducted with the discipline and perfection of detail, that this magnificent monument to the enterprise of Klaw & Erlanger was during those first two years under Mr. Luescher's management. He coined the title, "The House Beautiful," and set about to make it known the country over.

As a reward for conscientious labors, Mr. Erlanger offered Mr. Luescher and his close friend, Louis F. Werba, the lease of the New York Roof Garden, and the firm of Werba & Luescher was established—the first independent effort of both these two popular young managers—and one which fortunately has been renewed this summer. This Roof Garden had not been a profitable resort, and for several summers, under the direction of the Sires, George W. Lederer and Wayburn & Anderson, with various policies it had failed to succeed. In taking it over Werba & Luescher transformed it into a most attractive Japanese garden, and changed its name to "Wistaria Grove." Their other accomplishments that summer have become a part of stage history, for at least two features have lived to become permanent stars, and this roof has been a veritable gold mine ever since. They discovered and developed Elsie Janis, then unknown, and made her a star in a night, and brought before an anxious New York public, after a most skillful advertising campaign, the mysterious "Le Domino Rouge," who was afterwards disclosed as Mlle. Dazie, an American dancer, and who has since benefited by Mr. Luescher's personal direction and guidance, which together with her own charm and skill, has won for her

a place high among the world's great dancers and pantomimists.

During that summer on the roof, F. F. Proctor secured the services of Mr. Luescher and made him general manager of his circuit—a position he held until the amalgamation of the Keith & Proctor interests—when he retired in favor of E. F. Albee, who was made general manager of the united interests. During his regime with the Proctor interests, Mr. Luescher arranged for the American presentation of the Beerbohm Tree version of "Oliver Twist," with J. E. Dodson in the part of Fagin, a production which proved the turning point and transformed the Fifth Avenue Stock Company, which had been a losing venture, into a profitable proposition.

In the vaudeville houses of F. F. Proctor during that same period, he introduced innumerable new features and headliners, notably Lillian Russell, Julius Steger, Rahda (Ruth St. Dennis), Grace Van Studdiford, Henri De Vries, Charles E. Evans, Yvette Guilbert and many other equally important stars. It was Mr. Luescher, by the way, who introduced the very first singing and dancing ensemble on the vaudeville stage in a novelty called "The Beaux and Belles Octet."

After leaving F. F. Proctor, Mr. Luescher returned to Klaw & Erlanger, and the vaudeville knowledge he had gained during the interval came in to advantage during Mr. Erlanger's venture in "Advanced Vaudeville," which so far as publicity and general exploitation to excite public interest is concerned was skillfully and effectively handled by the general press department, under Mr. Luescher's direction. In fact, it was this remarkable campaign of publicity which at-

tracted the attention of Martin Beck, and when Klaw & Erlanger retired from the vaudeville field he made a request for the exclusive services of Mr. Luescher.

He at once established for the Orpheum Circuit a comprehensive and systematic bureau, perhaps the most complete of its kind in this country, for a close communication between the many resident managers, press representatives and the home office. He has kept the doings of this finely equipped circuit steadily before the public, and has proven a valuable lieutenant to Mr. Beck in various capacities.

Recently he was instrumental in bringing about the engagement of Mlle. Polaire at Hammerstein's Roof Garden, and the advance heralding, which had the advantage of his expert direction in an advisory way, resulted in one of the most sensational publicity campaigns New York has seen since that of "Le Domino Rouge."

Mark A. Luescher has done great things for others during the major portion of his active and brilliant career, but the re-establishment of the firm of Werba & Luescher seems to indicate that these two splendid young managers really intend to branch out independently and on their own, and they will have the best wishes and real confidence of nearly every member of the amusement world, for they are the sort who have lofty, refined ambitions, and are always doing something worth while.



Thus having indicated the conduct of affairs at the fountain head of activity, it will perhaps be of interest to enumerate one or two of the important moves made by this man of affairs this past few years. It is

scarcely necessary to dwell upon the rapid and astonishing building up of the Orpheum Circuit until it has become the most important chain of vaudeville houses ever conducted under one head; for its expansion from one single theatre in San Francisco a little over a decade ago to this commanding position of to-day, is a part of theatre history already often retold, and too well known to go over again in this volume. But men capable of bringing their circuit up to this present fine point of perfection were bound to forge still further ahead, and a European alliance with active interests abroad became their ambition—aiming toward an international tour which would ultimately encircle the globe.

The death of Thomas Barrasford last year hastened the carrying out of this desire, for through Alfred Butt, the director of the Palace Theatre, London, and incidentally one of the most progressive of the younger English managers, they were enabled to secure an interest in the houses formerly controlled by Mr. Barrasford, under what was generally referred to as the Barrasford Tour. Having taken over this active interest abroad, Mr. Beck's fine hand as an organizer again became evident, for within a month's time from the acquisition of this interest he had formed a pool in Great Britain and on the Continent, which combined the circuits of Barrasford's estate, with those of Walter Gibbons, Walter De Frese and the associated interests of Alfred Butt, and making a combined circuit so formidable as to arouse the spirited opposition and dissatisfaction of Sir Thomas Moss and Oswald Stoll, whose circuit of Moss' Empires had hitherto practically monopolized the British music hall field.

The Beck-Butt organization, as it is now frequently

referred to abroad, has been incorporated under the name of "The Variety Theatres Controlling Company," and this with its affiliations will operate, beginning next season the following European houses: Palace Theatre, London; Alhambra Theatre, Paris; Alhambra Theatre, Glasgow; New Orpheum Theatre, Berlin; The Hippodrome, Liverpool, England; The Hippodrome, Brighton, England; The Hippodrome, Leeds, England; The Hippodrome, Hull, England; The Hippodrome, Birmingham, England; The Hippodrome, Portsmouth, England; The Hippodrome, South End, England; The Hippodrome, Margate, England; The Hippodrome, Boscombe, England; The Hippodrome, Southampton, England; The Hippodrome, Sheffield, England; The Hippodrome, Colchester, England; The Hippodrome, Bolton, England; The Hippodrome, St. Helens, England; The Hippodrome, Nottingham, England; The Hippodrome, Blackburn, England; The Pavilion, Newcastle-on-Tyne, England; The Palace, Manchester, England; The Empire, Wolverhampton, England; Opera House, Tunbridge Wells, England; The Grand, Bristol, England, and the Empire, Aberdeen, Scotland. The Berlin house is yet to be built, but all the others will be in operation, under the new direction, by September 1st, 1910.

The full importance of this move is perhaps not fully realized by the American vaudeville artists and managers, but it indicates again the far-sightedness and the vast capacity of Martin Beck.



Frederic Shipman, the impresario, is a Canadian, born in Ottawa, the capital city of the Dominion, thirty-six years ago. His first venture in the enter-

tainment line was made at eighteen, when he engaged the Canadian cartoonist, Bengough, for a tour. Then followed tours with minor concert artists, always confined to Canada, where Mr. Shipman formed a Shakespearean repertory company, and toured Canada from Halifax to Vancouver. The tour lasted ten months, and was remarkably successful, so much so that he repeated it the following year. Emboldened by this venture, he went to New York and engaged in the theatrical business for a few years, but preferring the concert field, returned to it eight years ago, when he secured Jessie Maclachlan, the Scottish prima donna, for her first Canadian-American tour. Becoming interested in the possibilities for concert work in the Antipodes, Mr. Shipman took Miss Maclachlan there six years ago, with the result that he did not return to America, but since then has devoted all his time to the management of various concert stars in Australia, New Zealand and India. When last in Australia, Mr. Shipman arranged with Mme. Melba for a Canadian-American tour in the fall of 1910, and in January of that year returned to America for the first time in six years, with the exception of one brief visit. He has secured the exclusive management of Mme. Nordica for the seasons 1910-11-12, and has contracts with other prominent artists. Mr. Shipman has no bureau, and devotes himself entirely to personal management, having but one or two attractions at a time, and giving to them his entire attention.

CHAPTER XIV

MARGARET ILLINGTON'S RETURN TO THE STAGE, AND THE ADVENT OF MR. BOWES AS HER MANAGER SUGGESTS TO THE AUTHOR THAT THE "HUSBAND-MANAGER" HAS ALWAYS BEEN POTENT—THE LIFE STORY OF ABRAHAM L. ERLANGER—A PROLIFIC PRESS AGENT—GUS HILL'S CAREER—GABRIEL ASTRUC, THE PARIS IMPRESARIO—THE ACTOR-COLONIES—THE THRIFT OF THE PLAYER AND ESPECIALLY THE VAUDEVILLIAN.

The decision of Miss Margaret Illington, erstwhile Mrs. Daniel Frohman and now Mrs. Edward Bowes, by which she is to resume her artistic career, is interesting in that it gives emphasis to a previous statement of the writer to the effect that Mary Anderson alone has been proven sincere in her vow at the time of her marriage to Mr. de Navarro, that she would never be seen on the boards again.

Others have expressed the same ultimatum, but sooner or later they have all been tempted to return to the scene of their former triumphs. In the instance of Miss Illington the decision to retire absolutely was heralded with so much flourish, and was accompanied with such an intense plea for domesticity, that the announcement of her return to the stage came as a great surprise.

Of course there is no certainty that this excellent actress uttered all of the statements at the time cred-

ited to her. The subject is treated on in this volume because of the advent of a new managerial figure in Mr. Bowes. As a rule, the careers of stellar actresses have been greatly enhanced where the tours have been under the business guidance of their husbands, and this has been true, too, where no previous experience had been possessed by the latter.

Mrs. Fiske's great prosperity began when Mr. Harrison Grey Fiske assumed charge of her business affairs; the same may be said of Marie Cahill, who was married to her manager, D. V. Arthur, before he had made her one of the best box office attractions in this country. It is generally conceded that much of the credit for Madame Schumann-Heink's phenomenal financial success is due to the astuteness of her husband-impresario, William Rapp, Jr., though there is no record of any previous qualifications as a manager on his part.

Clara Morris' greatest years as a star were those in which she toured under her husband's direction, though the spectacle of this venerable couple endeavoring to prevent the sale of their beautiful country seat at Riverdale, N. Y., in foreclosure proceedings, through the literary efforts of the illustrious player now gradually becoming blind, is surely a heartrending one.

The theatrical profession, noted as it is for its charitable propensities, has been called upon more than once to give aid in this pitiable plight of one of their most shining lights, but the amount realized from the benefit and from other sources, has not been sufficient for so serious a purpose, nevertheless it is not to be believed that Clara Morris will lose her home—these threats have been given publicity for several

years. Yet something has always prevented the consummation of the dreaded transaction.

Clara Morris, for a period of about fifteen years, was the largest paid actress in this country, her stipulated fee was \$500 a night, but her tours were often interrupted because of a spinal trouble, which she was afflicted with. Madame was one of the first of the legitimate stars to succumb to the temptation of the vaudeville agent, and she was accorded a weekly salary of \$800 in the Keith theatres, but here, too, her appearances were of an intermittent character. Finally Clara Morris abandoned the stage altogether, and devoted herself solely to literary work, and it was generally understood that she had been very successful in the newer field.

Mary Anderson is by no means the only well-known actress to abandon a stage career in the height of her fame, but there is no other instance where a sacrifice equally great was endured—for Madame de Navarro is not to be reckoned as wealthy, nor has her domestic life since her marriage indicated any ambition to reign socially. The early struggles of "our Mary," too, were of a character that few indeed are called upon to duplicate.

At the time of her discovery by the late John W. Norton, the tall and awkward Kentucky girl had just passed through a series of barnstorming expeditions, the recital of which would read strangely to-day. It was only when she was under the direction of the late Henry E. Abbey that the gifted woman obtained any large financial returns. During this period, however, it was customary for her to rise every morning in time for five-o'clock mass, and this habit was followed in the most inclement weather imaginable.

Mary Anderson's last season in this country—and, for that matter, in any country—recorded gross receipts equal to any achieved by Bernhardt, Irving, or any of her illustrious confreres of that day; and since her retirement offers have been made to her almost every year—some naming as high as \$10,000 a week. Within the last year Madame de Navarro was tendered a proposition to give a series of Shakespearean readings, such as Ellen Terry is about to undertake here, and for these the remarkable sum of \$150,000 was quoted for fifty appearances, but a courteous reply reiterating emphatically her previous resolution never to appear in public again, save for charity, was all that the profferer—a Mr. Wagner—received.

Edith Kingdon, now Mrs. George Jay Gould, gave up her artistic career at the time of her marriage, but her professional life had not advanced to a matured state at this period, though it is not to be doubted, in view of the nature of her training under the late Augustin Daly, that Miss Kingdon would have become a stellar attraction in a very few years.

Agnes Huntington, before she became Mrs. Paul D. Cravath, was a prominent prima donna, and in "Paul Jones," as well as in other roles with the famous Bostonians, she was a conspicuous success. Her retirement from the stage has been absolute. Mrs. Cravath is a box holder at the Metropolitan Opera House, and she is conspicuous in all public-spirited movements as well as in the various charities in behalf of the profession she once so charmingly adorned.

Agnes Ethel—the best "Frou-Frou" of this generation—retired from the stage when in the zenith of her career, and the same statement qualifies for Julia Arthur, now Mrs. Benjamin Cheney, next to Mary An-

derson, the loss of no player has been so seriously felt. It was in the play, "More Than Queen," at what is now Keith and Proctor's moving picture theatre in West 23d Street, that the fame of Julia Arthur first reached a stellar state.

Lotta (Miss Crabtree) had a lengthy and very successful career, and although she has not appeared on the boards for two decades, is to be seen on Fifth Avenue almost any day looking quite the same as she did a generation ago. Lotta is immensely wealthy, due not only to the results of her own well-spent career, but also to the discernment she has shown in her investments. Lotta owns the Park Theatre in Boston, and has an interest in other theatrical property. It was the money provided by the inimitable "Firefly" of the 70's that started Henry E. Abbey on his remarkable managerial career. To-day Lotta is regarded as the wealthiest actress in the world.

Maggie Mitchell, like Lotta, amassed a fortune from her starring tours, and both appeared in plays of similar calibre. "Fanchon" was the vehicle with which she was wont to conjure, and that delicious comedy served her almost throughout her long and honorable career.

Mabel Gilman began to show signs of availability for grand opera about the time when she became the bride of William E. Corey, a multi-millionaire. She had risen from the ranks in the Casino, and the last two or three years of her artistic life disclosed a remarkable development, and great regret was felt at the loss of so youthful and capable an artiste. Mrs. Corey has been active in all efforts for the betterment or uplift of her erstwhile calling, while her studies have been continued abroad vigorously. It is not,

therefore, impossible that the name of Mabel Gilman may again be emblazoned in the Broadway district, and that audiences of a near future period may be privileged to hear her in a medium of a far higher order than any in which she has yet been heard here.

Edna May comes in for mention here because of the brief period required for the full development of the various phases of her artistic life. She had been a chorus girl in the very same musical play which afterward brought her to international fame. This was in "The Belle of New York." It happened that the prima donna cast for the title role had become ill or incapacitated early in the run of this production at the Casino, and George W. Lederer, who was the Casino's manager at the time, was at his wits' end for a substitute. Miss May volunteered to save the day, and she made an overwhelming success by reason of her peculiar qualifications for this particular role. Here, indeed, was an illustrative instance of fame achieved in a night, but it was in London that Edna May rose to the heights which made of her a world-famed celebrity. Miss May gave up stage work at the time of her marriage to Mr. Oscar Lewisohn.



The life story of Abraham Lincoln Erlanger would well justify a volume in itself, and it is surprising that a career so replete with interesting material should not have attracted the attention of modern authors, for whom the intrepid captain-general of theatredom would have proven a prolific theme.

A little over three decades ago he applied for employment at the old Academy of Music in Cleveland, Ohio, of which dear old "Uncle John" Ellsler was the

manager. "Abe" was at this time a boy, about fifteen years of age, and he was placed in charge of the cloak room and opera glass stand, but before he was there six months he had become a sort of major domo, being usher one night, ticket seller the next, while he served as call boy in an emergency, even acting as stage manager's assistant and playing small parts here and there. This kind of experience could be had in those days when theatres housed stock companies, limited in numbers, so that there was plenty of incentive for an ambitious and brilliant lad such as young Erlanger turned out to be.

In the afternoons he played baseball in front of the theatre, which in a sense accounts for the fact that he is to-day the most enthusiastic of fans!

When the beautiful Euclid Avenue Opera House was built, Ellsler secured the lease; he took Erlanger with him as a man of all work, and it may be said that he whom eighty million persons look to at this period for their entertainment, passed through as many vicissitudes as was necessary for his practical education. Provincial theatres were anything but prosperous in the late 70's. One of the first of Erlanger's important observations was to see the beautiful playhouse sold in its first year at sheriff's sale to the late Mark Hanna, who put his cousin, L. G. Hanna, in charge.

Mr. Hanna, who is now in the Philippines serving as a major in the United States Army, had little or no experience in theatricals, hence was pleased to avail himself of Erlanger's services, with the result that the latter was installed as treasurer and business manager combined, for economy was then a necessary practice.

Even at this period Hanna was a multi-millionaire. The conduct of the opera house was regarded by him

much as a new toy is to a six-year-old infant. In less than a month he placed young Erlanger in absolute control, even utilizing his services in his outside enterprises. Erlanger from the outset was a great believer in printer's ink; he began an aggressive widespread policy of advertising that was afterward copied by nearly all of the amusement managers in the country.

I happened to be an "avant courier" at the time of which I write, and it was my province to arouse publicity interest. These were the days when an agent in advance had to "hustle," hence it was a welcome spectacle to find a man of the Erlanger type at the helm. The era of big things in theatredom was just beginning to evolve. The "Napoleons" then were Brooks and Dickson, J. H. Haverly and Samuel Colville. The Frohmans were all advance agents in Haverly's employ. Thus it was this class of showmen that Erlanger had to "fix up with." No greater compliment can be paid to him to-day than to say he had much in common with them!

All of the visiting managers were so impressed with Erlanger's energy and business qualifications that they vied with each other for his services, but the boy resisted all efforts to take him out of the Ohio town, for he did not wish to leave his mother and sisters at home alone, as his father was away, and his brother, the Honorable Mitchell L. Erlanger of to-day, was studying law in Columbia College. When the latter reached his majority and graduated from college, Abraham came to New York, bringing with him his mother and sisters.

It will be of interest to state here that while the Erlanger family were well to do financially, Abraham felt it to be a duty on his part to share the responsi-

bility for their maintenance. This strong sense of fraternal feeling has marked his entire career. Loyalty has been his supreme virtue. Some of his comrades of those early days are still closely affiliated with him. When money came easy to him he set about to make his friends rich.

Once in New York, Erlanger began a strenuous routine. He rose at 6 A. M. (and it is the same to-day). He exercised four trotting horses of local celebrity and great value for an hour each morning, and he has throughout his life been a perfect fiend for athletics and out-door exercises. Mr. Erlanger's first engagement on the road was as advance agent of Mr. and Mrs. George S. Knight. He was with this artistic duo for two months in this capacity, when, in conjunction with John H. Havlin, he became their manager. This tour was successful, and by reason of the record he had made was engaged by Charles B. Jefferson to manage the spring tour of the late Joseph Jefferson. At this time Erlanger was paid the largest salary paid up to that day to any agent with possibly a single exception.

During the five years he was with the Jeffersons he drew a salary of \$300 a week, and was obliged to travel but ten weeks a year, but he was worth the money, for one of his first acts was to place the seat scale at \$2 for orchestra chairs. This was regarded as a dangerous innovation, but that Erlanger was right is evidenced by the known fact that ever since the public has been attracted to the spectacle of high prices. Mr. Jefferson himself feared greatly that his new manager had placed his tour in jeopardy, for two weeks before the opening night, which was at Lexington, Ky., he wrote to Erlanger telling him that he had

made a great mistake in charging \$2, for "Rip Van Winkle" was no longer a novelty to which Mr. Erlanger replied:

"Your letter came too late. Every seat in the house sold at \$2!" And these prices prevailed the remainder of Joseph Jefferson's life.

After the opening tour with Jefferson Mr. Erlanger entered into an arrangement with Marc Klaw, who was managing Effie Ellsler, and with him took charge of the route of that sterling actress, for which he received a stipulated salary and a percentage of the receipts after they had reached a certain amount. It was in this engagement that Erlanger showed his real quality. In olden times it was customary to assert that any one could make good "ahead" of a star like Jefferson, but all agreed that it required a compelling genius to attract the public to the theatres where an unknown star was holding forth. Effie Ellsler was well known in the East, but wholly new to the South. It was the Erlanger idea (and he did actually carry that idea out) to jump the company from Philadelphia to Little Rock, Arkansas. He proceeded in advance two weeks, and by vigorous work and a veritable cyclone of publicity, he inaugurated a campaign which is remembered to this day in the towns visited.

The agents of to-day can have no idea as to the service which Erlanger rendered, for there is no such application and fidelity to an employer's interest in this easy era. Words fail the writer in his desire to convey to the lay reader just exactly what type of an "agent" Abraham L. Erlanger was. There is no standard to which he can refer by way of comparison. It was a combination of tireless toil with an ingratiating personality which made its impress in every city. We

do not comprehend this sort of achievement to-day. The modern theatrical manager would say:

"If the attraction is good, the people will come. If it is not, they'll stay away. The best agent in the world will not avail if the goods are not delivered!"

But this statement did not qualify at the time of which I write, a superb attraction would play to empty benches if the public were not properly prepared for it. Mr. Erlanger revolutionized this phase of the theatrical business before he began in the booking business. His rise has not been accidental if it has been meteoric!

Marc Klaw was so impressed with Erlanger's methods that he telegraphed him to come back to the company and then and there offered to take him into partnership instead of paying him the salary heretofore agreed upon. This partnership has lasted until this day without friction.

Being observing men, Klaw and Erlanger saw the condition of the country's theatres, and noted the primitive booking system which prevailed. When they came to New York they were glad to avail themselves of an opportunity to become factors in the reformation of this system with a result which is now history, and what they did achieve is briefly, though concisely, stated elsewhere in this volume.



With a career as press agent and exploitation director covering a period of seventeen years, during which time there have been various theatre connections, winter circus, water carnival, athletic and military tournaments, country fairs, live-stock expositions, horse shows, bench shows, flower shows, amusement

parks, aerial ascensions, civic celebrations, fireworks displays, automobile races, regattas and almost everything under the sun to be covered in a publicity way in the amusement field, George S. Wood, manager of the publicity department of the Colonial Theatre, Chicago, enjoys the rare distinction of remaining in one city year after year and preserving the essential and vital relationship of friendly intercourse with press and publishers. For be it remembered that the life of the press agent is the material evidence of creative activity, strenuous imagination and promulgation of interests and subjects with which the individual is identified. It is not an unusual condition to find the fertility of the field exhausted, and many famous press agents concede that a large modicum of their success lies in the change of atmosphere and variety of opportunities. In the midst of the demands for exploitation of various amusement projects, Mr. Wood has handled any number of political campaigns and commercial projects carrying a news value important to press and public alike.

From active newspaper work Mr. Wood went to the Auditorium in 1893 and directed the publicity work for "America," the magnificent World's Fair spectacle that has never been duplicated. That winter he engaged with David Henderson, at the Chicago Opera House, the following season going to the Royal English Circus and Winter Carnival. Another year and he joined the forces of John D. Hopkins, looking after the publicity department of a chain of theatres giving the tremendously popular combination of vaudeville features and stock company revivals of famous plays at cheap prices. Mr. Wood remained there several years, retaining his connection with the Auditorium,

and framed and executed any number of big campaigns subsequently. When George W. Lederer abandoned Broadway and took himself to Chicago to guide the destinies of the newly christened Colonial Theatre Beautiful, the name of George S. Wood was painted on the door of the publicity department, and there it has remained ever since, identified with some of the most unique and effective publicity work connected with an American theatre. Born in Galesburg, Ill., October 10, 1863, a full-fledged cowboy at seventeen in Colorado when there was not a foot of wire fence in the State, later in the engineering and train service of railroad life, Mr. Wood drifted into the newspaper field in the Middle West, and thence to the opportunities, disappointments, successes and failures of the tried press agent.



One of the wealthiest of the managers of to-day is Gus Hill. He was born in New York City fifty years ago. His career is of much interest. He first branched out as an all-round athlete, and soon became the champion club swinger of the world. He began to show his business acumen through handling big athletic events, wrestlers and some of the most imposing prize fights of the 80's. He entered the theatrical field as a manager by organizing several of the best variety shows seen in this country long before the era of the continuous performance.

Mr. Hill has had as many as a dozen companies on tour at a period when theatrical management was a dangerous investment, yet he has never had a failure. No tour ever inaugurated by Gus Hill has lasted less

than two or three seasons, while some of his organizations have survived for eighteen years!

Among the artists now famous, who were discovered by Gus Hill, are Montgomery and Stone, Weber and Fields, and the late Dan McAvoy. Mr. Hill was one of the first to enter the burlesque field, and is one of the largest stockholders in the Columbia Amusement Company. He has also been a vital force in the progressive policies with which that worthy corporation has prospered.

Above all things, Gus Hill has the reputation of being eminently honest, and although a close figurer, his word is accepted in preference to a contract by his business associates. He is a life member of the Actors' Fund and of the Elks.



There is one impresario of whom we, here in America, have heard but little, but who, nevertheless, has been a tremendous factor in the artistic world. Gabriel Astruc, of Paris, France, has been solving American operatic problems for years, yet were it not for the fact that he was the impresario to bring the Metropolitan Opera House Company to the French capital, Americans would not know of him even today. M. Astruc is the most prominent impresario in the world. He also is the most notable managerial figure in the world of music aside from his operatic achievements.

No impresario of this country in the last two decades has failed to avail himself of this man's vast influence. M. Astruc's interests are so large that to enumerate them would require a record of practically

everything achieved in modern European opera. To him must the London directors of Covent Garden go not only for their artists, but also for their operas. It was the ingenuity of this remarkable Frenchman that made possible the extraordinary opera season at the Chatelet Theatre in June, 1910, when receipts averaging nearly \$12,000 per representation were recorded.

M. Astruc was born in Bordeaux, March 14, 1864. He is the director of the Paris Musical Society. He is the head of the largest and most important engagement bureau in the world; is a member of the Society of French Authors and Composers, and of the Theatre Secretaries' Association in Paris. He is that rarity among modern impresarios—a musician—and he is also an able journalist, as well as a playwright. His plays have been produced in Paris theatres with success. M. Astruc has founded two art newspapers, and is the proud possessor of the degree of Bachelor of Letters. In 1893 he was appointed head of the Commission of Fine Arts at the World's Fair in Chicago. It was then that he was affiliated with the late Maurice Grau and Henry E. Abbey.

In these days, when grand opera is destined to become international in scope, the influence of M. Astruc will be felt in America perhaps even greater than it is now in Europe, and for this reason, if for no other, this recital should serve to introduce one who has been and is to be a vital figure in our musical life!



Forty years ago perhaps a dozen theatrical men and women owned their homes, and these were the envied of their kind. The fact that A. M. Palmer lived in his

own house at Stamford, Conn., or that Francis Wilson had built a grand mansion at New Rochelle were events worthy of discussion. The spectacle of a manager or player owning a city home was not on view, at least if such a luxury was possessed by the manager or player of that day; it is not very clearly stamped on my memory. At best, a desultory case might be named.

About fifteen years ago a different state of affairs could have been recorded. While to-day a complete transformation has developed in that actors' homes are abundant within fifty miles of the metropolis, and practically on every railroad running from New York, Jersey City and Long Island.

Thousands of actors, singers, specialty people, managers and agents own their homes to-day. Some (and the number is not insignificant) own vast tracts of land, bought gradually with their savings, and these have built on their property each year, the same increasing in value to such an extent that the original investment has been realized many times over.

To name all of the thrifty professionals who in the last two decades have become owners of real estate, would require much effort. There are a dozen theatrical colonies within fifty miles of New York. Among the locations are: The Atlantic Highlands, N. J.; Long Branch, N. J.; Fair Haven, N. J.; Elmhurst, L. I.; Bay Shore, L. I.; St. James, L. I.; Freeport, L. I.; Southampton, L. I.; Mt. Vernon, N. Y.; New Rochelle, N. Y.; Stamford and New Canaan, Conn.

At St. James, L. I., it is the player who has come forth as pioneer and upbuilder. Some of the most beautiful homes—the first of their type of architecture—to be found in the suburban districts are located

here. The earliest settlers in this now famous resort were a half dozen thrifty performers from the variety stage, such as Robert L. Dailey, Bert Leslie, Frank McNish and Tony Farrell. These started a club, they then built a clubhouse, and among the present members are William Collier, Robert L. Dailey, De Wolf Hopper, Charlie Mason, Frank Taylor, Frank Campbell, Frank Lawlor, John Barton, John Connell, Bert Leslie, J. Royer West, Tony Farrell, Joe Harris, Harry Foy, Fred Walton, Tom Lewis, Gleichman, and Edward Abeles.

All of the above own their homes at St. James. Two baseball teams were organized from the club members and the captain of one was Willie Collier.

The colony at Southampton is headed by that perennial duo, McIntyre and Heath, and they own immense tracts of land here which they bought ten years ago. They sold lots to thrifty vaudevillians at about \$125 an acre, and in a very short period the value has increased to above \$600. Victor Moore, who has had a meteoric rise within the last few years, bought eighteen acres, and among others who bought land at Southampton are Barney Gilmore, The Empire City Quartette, Ada Lewis and Charles Macdonald.

At Freeport, L. I., Raymond and Caverley, a successful team of dialect comedians, head the colony (one of the largest aggregations of theatrical home owners in the world) which consists of: Spellmeier and Middleton, Frank Morrell, Hayes and Suites, Robert H. Hodge, Tom Barret, Phil Ott, Paul Morton, Bill Black, Harry Hills and Ada Emerson, Raymond and Caverley, Lottie Williams, Nellie V. Nicholas, George P. Murphy, Carl Henry, James Collins, Rube Welsh, Frank O'Brien, Mike Coakley and Madeline Marshall,

Leo Carrillo, Fred J. Bailey, Ralph Austin, Arthur Deagon, Cartmell and Harris and Jenie Jacobs.

The first to create an actors' colony was John T. Kelly, the famous Irish comedian whose thrift is well known. In 1895 he went to Elmhurst, L. I., and was quickly followed by the late Tony Pastor. Among those in Mr. Kelly's colony can be named: Fred Hallen and Mollie Fuller (Mrs. Hallen), Harry Rose, Marie Dressler, Georgie Caine, the Russell Brothers, Edgar Smith, Louis Wesley, Al H. Wilson, the Sisters Angeles, Catherine Linyard and Lew Dockstader. Mr. Kelly was one of the first to build a palatial residence on Long Island and he has exerted a vast influence among his colleagues.

Fair Haven, N. J., which is within a few hundred yards of the prosperous and beautiful town of Red Bank, has been famous for its actors' colony. Here are some of the handsomest homes to be found on the Atlantic coast. One of the pioneers here was Frank Martineau, a worthy endeavorer in the business department of theatricals, now associated with Messrs. Klaw & Erlanger. Among the many who compose this happy and prosperous colony are Frank Herbert, Lew and Tony Hunting, who own separate houses; Harry Blocksom, George Walters, John Murphy, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Morrissey (who own two of the handsomest homes on the Atlantic coast), Nelson and Milledge, Gracie and Burnett, Annie Hart, Augustus Hogan, Frank Evans, Keegan and Mack. The four Masons, Murry Krause, John Cantwell, and others from the field of vaudeville, for it seems that the variety performer is either more prosperous and saving than the legitimate player, or else they are more inclined to domesticity.

These boys and girls are an interesting set, and loyal to each other. Every year they get up a big benefit for either their fire company or for some other worthy purpose, and when all these property owners appear in one programme they surely do give "some show." They have their own yacht club, and between them own more than a dozen launches, yachts and sailboats.

The writer has devoted some space to the subject in order that a correct idea may prevail as to the actors' use of his savings. Only space limitations prevent the recording here of thousands of happy home owners, while the number of actors who are landlords, owning city real estate, is so large that a chapter would be required to do justice to the subject!

CHAPTER XV

BIOGRAPHIES CONTAINING MUCH THEATRICAL HISTORY—F. F. PROCTOR, FROM ACROBAT TO VAUDEVILLE KING—ALFRED G. ROBYN COMES TO THE METROPOLIS TO DEVELOP HIS CAREER—HENRY DAZIAN—CHARLES L. WAGNER—AMBROSE J. SMALL—JOHN J. MURDOCK THE TYPICAL SHOWMAN—MICHAEL SHEA—J. H. MOORE.

F. F. Proctor is indeed a vaudevillian. There may be some question as to the priority of the individual efforts of such magnates of to-day as B. F. Keith, but on balance, when all is summed up, Mr. Proctor may well lay claim to being "a" father of the great expansion from the "variety" of the 60's to the vaudeville of to-day, if indeed he be not "the" father of it all!

Fred Levantine was a member of the great acrobatic team, "the Levantine Brothers," who did a bar act such as is not to be seen anywhere to-day. Brought up in the circus profession, Fred soon drifted to playing dates, and early in his career showed a business acumen that was destined to bring him prominently in the amusement field as manager as well as a performer. Proctor was of all things a saving man in his early career, and the writer recalls that it was entirely due to a plethora of the long green that he was able to make many of the great strides in the long and honorable career that followed; it is said of him that to this day, in spite of all the vicissitudes of his early

struggles, he never contracted an obligation that he could not liquidate, and though several of the various partners with whom he afterward became affiliated—were compelled to abandon the field, Proctor himself always kept on making progress. His first business venture was at a little Burlesque Theatre, still standing on Green Street in Albany, N. Y., then called "Levantine's," but now named the "Gayety." Here for almost a decade were presented under his direction some of the best variety shows that had been seen in America during that period, and it is claimed that the house never had a losing week while Proctor was its manager; and no man stood higher in the esteem of Albanians than he, but ambition was the Proctor long suit, and he craved for larger worlds to conquer. In 1884 he leased, in conjunction with W. C. Coup, the brother-in-law of P. T. Barnum, the theatorium and grounds situated near the Genesee Falls in Rochester, N. Y., and together they made of the place one of the finest and most elaborate show grounds that the country had up to that time beheld. Five large halls were filled with the choicest and most valuable collection of curiosities and rare species of inanimate possessions controlled by Professor Worth, while in the main auditorium, a stock comic opera company, enlisting some of the best-known stars of the day, presented a wide range of operettas. The venture was at the outset a tremendous success, and for several weeks the attendance was limited only to the capacity of the auditorium. Just about this time a new and important element had entered into the theatrical field in H. R. Jacobs, who had sprung from a small dime museum in Park Row, and began putting up large tents in cities like Montreal and Albany, and

giving a great deal of show for a very small price of admission. When Jacobs reached Albany his success there became so effective that Proctor began to feel it at his little theatre on Green Street, and he sought out the vigorous "Napoleon" of 10, 20 and 30-cent amusements, and together they leased what was up to then known as the Martin Opera House in Albany, and thus was evolved what soon became the greatest cheap priced theatrical firm this country has ever known, under the business name of Jacobs and Proctor.

Together and individually these two ambitious showmen started up theatres in nearly every important city in the land, and in some cities like New York, Philadelphia and Chicago, three and four theatres were controlled by the firm. At one time, about the year of 1888, they were separately or jointly concerned in over 50 theatres, and nearly as many companies.

Jacobs, however, seemed to lose his balance. Eventually, and at the end of a few years, the firm dissolved, leaving Proctor with the two Albany theatres only; but as usual Proctor himself was not to be crushed, and we next hear of his building the theatre on 23d Street, which for a quarter of a century has borne his name. At the outset the 23d Street Theatre was a strictly first-class house, and the attractions were furnished by Charles Frohman. It was at this house that Frohman made his first great ten strike in "Shenandoah," which made for him a vast fortune, and inaugurated his money-making career. Among other plays which Proctor first produced here were "The County Fair," which dedicated the house and had a prolonged run, and "The Great Metropolis." The firm of Klaw and Erlanger were first made prominent in

this, the first Proctor playhouse in New York. In the year of 1891, or possibly it was '92, Proctor was impressed with the great success which Benjamin F. Keith was having in Boston with a new idea in theatricals, entitled "Continuous Performance," and with very little ado and no preliminary advertising the theatre was suddenly shifted to this policy. An opera company of 40 persons was engaged, 10 or 12 specialty artists were secured weekly, at prices of the extremely popular order the house was launched and so continued without a break for over 20 years. Three or four years after the 23d Street house was started with the "Continuous," Mr. Proctor indulged in what was probably regarded as his most important and daring undertaking. The 19th Ward in upper New York had no theatre, except the Terrace Garden on 58th Street and Lexington Avenue, and it was the Proctor idea to build a great amusement palace directly opposite this place, and this he set about to do in a prodigious manner. When the house opened it was disclosed to the public with great eclat. Not even in Europe has there to this day ever been built a grander combination of inviting amusement halls. The theatre proper being but one of many auditoriums, for even in the basement was a finely constructed theatre with stage, and the cutest surroundings while on the roof was as fine a garden theatre as New York has ever had to this day. Adjoining the main theatre on the ground floor was a palm garden large and elaborate enough to house a grand opera company.

The theatre, or as it should have been called, "The Theatre of Theatres," was opened on Labor Day of the year 1895, with a programme of the truly majestic order. Broadway prices were charged, and Mr. Proc-

tor indulged in luxuries, even to the business staff, which consisted of E. D. Price, who had a contract at a fabulous salary, and Frank J. Wilstach, who, under Mr. Proctor, first began to show the ability which later on characterized his efforts. However, Mr. Proctor and his broad ideas were too big for the locale, and though it took months before the great enterprise began to show any decline, eventually the inevitable occurred and the house had an irregular career, going from one style of entertainment to another, until perhaps in desperation the indefatigable showman closed all but the main auditorium tight and turned the house into a legitimate vaudeville theatre, and this the house has been ever since. But it is the opinion of this writer that Mr. Proctor was 20 years ahead of time in his exploitation of this almost ennobling enterprise, but he kept marching on, and a few years later he added the 125th Street house that now bears his name. Then the Fifth Avenue Theatre, which is said to be his hobby, and if it has not been costly to him the writer is in error. Then he built what was destined to be one of his most profitable investments, the Newark Theatre, while he has since added houses in Troy, Elizabeth, and always maintaining the Le-land in Albany.

A few years ago Mr. Proctor amalgamated with the Keith interests, and together they corporately hold what should be called "The Manhattan Circuit."

Mr. Proctor's private life is in perfect line with his business career; away back in the very earliest days of his first struggles he was married to Miss Polly Daly, then the very best serio-comic that the variety stage could boast of. Miss Daly's sway over the public she was wont to face was such that only when her hus-

band's great business interests were at their zenith did she retire and then only to give him aid in a more material way. By this marriage one son—Frederick F. Proctor, Jr., was born, and two daughters, who were recently married in Larchmont, N. Y., where the Proctor family for a long time have had their home. The young Mr. Proctor is very similar to his father in methods. He has had an excellent business training, and the benefit of several tours of the world.



One of the most important additions to the ranks of the New York musical fraternity is Alfred G. Robyn, of St. Louis, who has been called here to fill the responsible position as organist and choirmaster at the Tompkins Avenue Congressional Church in Brooklyn, where he will have charge of a double quartette and full choir. That Mr. Robyn will be a prominent, valuable and influential factor in the New York field is certain, for he is wide awake, the force of his power radiating far and wide with irresistible potency. He is a sound, scholarly musician, a competent drill master, a composer of note, a fine organist and pianist, a genial companion, and a man of business and art. He has a most delightful and refreshing personality; generous, unassuming, is a capital story teller and a foster father to those who are struggling against musical fate. Association with him is unalloyed delight; but the crowning glory of his character is his modesty and his altruism.

Alfred G. Robyn comes from a musical stock. His father was a pioneer in the field of music. As the organizer of the first orchestra west of Pittsburg he had the honor of being the first to introduce to that great

section the noted artists of bygone days. He was the founder (1838) of the St. Louis Philharmonic Society, which is still in existence. His mother was a celebrated singer. Naturally, with such gifted parents, as a boy, it was unnecessary for him to seek instruction beyond the threshold of his own home. In fact, he has had no other aid than that afforded by his parents. With his inherent genius, he soon cast off from the parent ship and launched his own bark upon the tide. Speaking of this talent he said: "A person who is able to compose music deserves no praise for it whatever. It is a gift which he has by nature. His credit lies in the use to which he puts his gift." Granted. It is therefore well within the province of modesty to accord a high place in the world of art to one who, by virtue of the uses to which he has put his own gift, has lived up to this self-prescribed law. To particularize:

At the age of nine he played a Mozart piano concerto with orchestra; at eleven, he was organist in one of the leading churches; at thirteen, he published his first efforts at composition; at fifteen, he made his debut as a violinist with a Rode concerto; at seventeen, he was pianist for the Emma Abbott Concert Company, covering a season of forty concerts. Since then he has devoted himself to the various lines in which he developed particular proficiency—namely, conductor, composer, pianist and organist. His talents run in so many directions, in any one of which he might easily have been successful, that he has found it necessary to confine his efforts to the few. He visited Europe eleven times, giving concerts in all the large cities, and therefore enjoys an international reputation. His versatility is astounding not only as performer

but as creator. The range of his work covers nearly every form, comic opera, oratorio, chamber music, symphonies, popular songs, operettas, cantatas, concertos, etc. One has but to glance over the successes of his compositions to appreciate their popularity. Among hundreds of songs and ballads a few of the most popular are, "It Was a Dream," "Manzanillo," "Fulfilled," "You," "Answer," "Evermore," "Alone," which have been upon the lips and hearts of the people ever since their appearance. They possess the one essential of popularity—an appealing quality. Mr. Robyn is peculiarly gifted in this line because he understands the voice and the desires of the people. He knows what they like and what they want and he has the gift which enables him to feed them. The best known of his comic operas are: "The Yankee Consul," "The Yankee Tourist," "Manette," "Marlin," "Princess Beggar," "Jacinta," "The Mayoress," "Beans and Buttons," "Soldier in Petticoats," "Court Martial" and "A Slim Legacy."

He was now under contract with Henry W. Savage for five operas in as many successive years, the first, "The Yankee Consul," now making a brilliant tour. Those who know claim that this composer is the legitimate successor to the Gilbert and Sullivan school, sadly in need of replenishing. The work upon which Mr. Robyn is at present engaged is the second opera for Mr. Savage, entitled "Padishah," dealing with Tripoli. The book is by John Wilson. It will be brought out next August in St. Louis. The oratorios, "Ascension" and "Love Divine," have been given with success, and are recognized as the products of a musical mind of large dimensions. In the latter Mr. Robyn has introduced a novel effect which would

force many a scholastic to sit up and listen. The finale consists of a double fugue in the stretto of which the melody of "Old Hundred" is intoned by trumpets and trombones in unison, the congregation joining in, while the second choir chants the theme of the hymn, "Love Divine," during the concluding thirty-two measures. Polyphony! Counterpoint! It is akin to "Die Meistersinger."

Since Mr. Robyn's arrival in New York, with a charming bride of seven months, he has been the recipient of several honors. At the annual meeting of the Manuscript Society of New York recently he was elected a member and appointed to the board of directors. Although St. Louis is a rising musical center, Mr. Robyn believes a man deteriorates if he remains fixed in one place; therefore he has come to headquarters.



Although of a reticent disposition, and one which frowns on publicity, Henry Dazian has been an important figure in the progress which has come in the amusement world in this generation. It was when his father, the late W. Dazian, had his first costume emporium on Broome Street in the late 60's that the son began to interest himself in stage matters. The elder Dazian even at this period was practically the sole source of supply for managers in the costuming of their productions. When Henry Dazian reached his majority in age he established the acquaintanceship of a few of the most prominent impresarios and managers, and this gradually matured to a warm friendship.

The Dazian firm moved to Union Square about a quarter of a century ago, where its enormous business

was conducted until a few years ago, when it was moved to its present quarters on West 44th Street. To-day it is the largest concern in the world of its class. Henry Dazian has provided the capital for many of the most important operatic and dramatic enterprises in the last three decades. He was the most intimate friend of the late Maurice Grau up to the time of the latter's death, and was one of the several gentlemen to provide the funds for the corporation known as the Maurice Grau Opera Company, which was responsible for the first profitable operatic regime in the Metropolitan Opera House.

Mr. Dazian spends half of each year abroad, usually in company with Al Hayman or Charles Frohman, and other of his intimates. He is a millionaire, and it is worthy of record that his vast fortune has been accumulated in the supply to theatrical producers of their costumes. He could tell an interesting tale if he would of the difference in the expenditure to-day on a production compared with the amount paid to him in the Bowery days of the Dazian institution.



Through the retirement from the Lyceum field of the late H. L. Slayton, there has come into the line of musical endeavor a young and promising manager, Charles L. Wagner, who in the last year has made his impress on the western centres, and whose plans for the future are on an elaborate scale. Mr. Wagner is one of the youngest entrepreneurs in this country. Besides bringing to America the coming season the eminent Bohemian violinist, Jarislav Kocian, Mr. Wagner has the management of the lately organized St. Paul Symphony Orchestra, which is under the artistic

rule of the eminent conductor, Walter Henry Rothwell.

The great success of the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra has undoubtedly been the incentive for the enterprise now being fostered in the sister Twin City. Mr. Wagner is likely to become an important figure in the musical world. It is known that his efforts are encouraged by several Western capitalists, and he is now in negotiation with several distinguished foreign artists for American tours. Mr. Rothwell has spent the past summer in Europe in the interest of the forthcoming tour of his Symphony Orchestra. The spectacle of a dozen of these orchestral bodies firmly entrenched in their respective locales and supported by home capital is indeed an imposing one. The significance of it all will be clearly apparent in another year.



Just at the present time when almost daily reports are in circulation to the effect that Toronto is to have a couple of new theatres, and when the public attention is directed toward contemplated additions in the amusement line it is timely to refer to the man who is recognized as the dean of the theatrical managers in this section of Canada—Ambrose J. Small. To Mr. Small is given the credit for placing Toronto and the Province of Ontario in a position where the best of the traveling combinations are induced to visit. Notwithstanding tariff regulations, which to those connected with the business appeared a discouraging hardship, this dauntless young Canadian, after years of persistent effort, finally placed the business on such a basis that the managers of theatrical companies re-

gard engagements here as the most profitable in their circuit. Canadian theatrical history results greatly from the labor which Mr. Small performs in his office in the Grand Opera House, Toronto, where the routes are arranged and the business—with an enormous amount of correspondence—of the circuit conducted. The Small circuit of theatres is as follows:

Toronto, Grand Opera House and Majestic Theatre; Hamilton, Grand Opera House; Ottawa, Russell Theatre; London, Grand Opera House; Kingston, Grand Opera House; Peterboro, Grand Opera House; St. Catharines, Grand Opera House; Galt, Scott's Opera House; Woodstock, Opera House; Belleville, Carman Opera House; Brockville, Grand Opera House; Guelph, Royal Opera House; Stratford, Theatre Albert; Berlin, Opera House; Lindsay, Academy of Music; Barrie, Grand Opera House; Orillia, Opera House; Brantford, Opera House. The popularity of the Toronto theatres managed by Mr. Small is attested by the invariably large audiences. The attractions booked for these houses are always a shade better than the standard set by popular price theatres, and the "business" is correspondingly satisfactory. During the past year Mr. Small has very materially added to his chain of prosperous houses. He is by all manner of means the Napoleon of Canadian theatricals.



A few men in the amusement calling in the generation now passing have possessed the qualities which entitled them to the distinction of being called "Showmen," a species of whom Phineas T. Barnum was per-

haps the best illustrative example. Few indeed of the men who have become famous in theatricals, in the business department, revealed in their careers the distinctive qualifications which the great Barnum was noted for. J. H. Haverly was of a similar type, as was, in a lesser degree, "Harry" Miner, but of those who still live—look where one may—an inability to find a worthy successor to these pioneers must be confessed.

The modern "showman," while he has prospered beyond the hopes of his predecessors, has come to his own greatly through the opportunity which progress has bestowed upon him. The nearest approach to the old-time showman that can here be alluded to is John J. Murdock, a man from the Middle West, whose active career began in the late 90's, when a Chicago firm of scenic artists and theatrical constructors named Sosman and Landis were prominent in a managerial way. This firm, while they did operate, displayed an aptitude in all their dealings which made one desire to penetrate into the causes of their prosperity. Sosman and Landis were the first to do big things in vaudeville in the West. They set the pace in Cincinnati at Pike's Opera House, not only for vaudeville in the entire West, but they were the pioneers of high-class stock companies. They also inaugurated the Masonic Temple Roof Garden in Chicago, when it presented the most remarkable all-star vaudeville programmes which the West has ever known.

John Murdock was their tours de force throughout their activity. At first he was stationed in Indianapolis, where he brought forth so many innovations and introduced such novel methods for the purpose of

attracting the public that his ideas were emulated all over the country. Everything he did in those days has survived.

When Murdock was made the manager of the Roof Garden in Chicago, the institution had been noted for its checkered career and its constantly changing policies. He began to present the biggest bills in this country; and he advertised tremendously. Murdock brought into prominence a number of the most successful vaudeville acts of to-day. It was he who evolved the act known as "The Girl with the Auburn Hair," surrounding her with a sort of mysterious identity. She became the most profitable box office attraction of this period.

Mr. Murdock afterward married "The Girl with the Auburn Hair," but her vogue lasted long after; in fact, the attraction was potent for about eight years.

In 1900 Murdock came East, and he had more to do with the amalgamation of the vaudeville managers in that year than any other individual, not excepting Mr. Keith.

So impressed were the Western magnates of vaudeville with Murdock's ability that he was placed in charge of the Western vaudeville situation, and for several years he alone was responsible for the policy observed in a score of important theatres and a hundred smaller ones. He has been a factor in every big "deal" effected in Western or Eastern vaudeville in the last decade—and when moving pictures loomed up as a strong feature he was the first to grasp the significance of it all. Murdock brought the warring factions together in the motion picture field just as he has so often in the vaudevilles. He is the prince of peace makers!

John J. Murdock is a man of quiet and modest demeanor. He is the last man in the world a stranger would assume to be a powerful potentate. Always easy to approach—gifted with an ingratiating personality, and possessed of almost unparalleled energy and perseverance, he has made his presence felt in almost every branch of the amusement industry, while he has had the happy faculty of conciliating many widely conflicting interests, in crucial periods, and although he has often had to shift his personal position on the theatrical “chessboard” in some way, he has been able to make such transpositions without losing the good will of either of the opposing factions!



A few of the old-time vaudeville managers who prosper in this era are not as conspicuous figures as some of the more recent ones. This is due to a lack of desire on the part of the former to appear in the limelight. Michael Shea, of Buffalo, N. Y., has managed variety or vaudeville theatres in his home city for more than three decades. He is perhaps the sole remaining exponent of the old-time “variety” showman, who, when Shea began his career in Buffalo, consisted of such endearing personalities as William J. Gilmore, William Henry Walker (Harry Williams), Daniel Shelby, William Emmett, “Josh” Hart, Robert W. Butler, Frederick F. Levantine (F. F. Proctor), and the late Tony Pastor. Mr. Shea has always inclined to the music hall type of auditorium, which prevails more abroad than in America. In the selection of his entertainers he has exercised a discernment which has been almost infallible. He has at this time two immensely successful theatres of modern char-

acter in Buffalo and one in Toronto. Although he has confined himself to these cities in his vaudeville endeavors, and always was reluctant to expand into the territory of others, no man that can be here recalled has resisted opposition more vigorously or successfully. Sorry has been the fate of the few who have attempted to intrench themselves in the Shea territory. This is so true that, notwithstanding the size of the population in Buffalo, Shea alone survives there to-day with vaudeville of the first class!

In the early 90's, before the advent of B. F. Keith, there was a type of amusement resort prevailing in the West which combined the circus, the museum, and what is now called vaudeville. An entire building would be used on the main street of the principal cities. A firm which was a pioneer in this line of endeavor was Sackett and Wiggins. They had interests of this class in Minneapolis, Detroit, and other cities. Gradually the vaudeville part would attain greater prominence. In Detroit a vital figure in these developments was J. H. Moore, who about 1895 inaugurated a policy of giving four performances daily of vaudeville. The receipts at the box office were so large that Moore made every effort to induce the stars who in other cities appeared but twice daily to concede the extra performances—in Detroit and afterward in Rochester. Moore succeeded in this, and for several years he did not deviate from this policy in the two cities named, and it was not until long after the amalgamation of the managers in 1900 that this most typical of Showmen gave way to modern methods, in fact, some of the most distinguished artists from the legitimate stage, such as Rose Coghlan, Marie Wainwright and Pauline Hall, appeared

four times daily in these theatres, when they would have resented vigorously any effort on the part of other managers to induce them to do likewise. When Moore did embrace modern ideas, he did so on a great scale. He built the Temple Theatre in Detroit, and afterward a superb theatre under the same name in Rochester, and he has amassed a large fortune by the conduct of these. James H. Moore is of a decidedly retiring disposition. He has always shrunk from publicity of a personal character, but when occasion called for it he could put up a battle royal. Like Mr. Shea, he has been able to protect his territory against opposition to this day. The two have been warm friends, and have worked together harmoniously, playing practically the same programmes in all of their theatres.

CHAPTER XVI

THE LEGITIMATE ARTIST IN VAUDEVILLE—WILL MARTIN BECK AND WILLIAM MORRIS COMBINE?—THE WESTERN VAUDEVILLE MANAGERS' ASSOCIATION—LEO FEIST'S WORK FOR THE NATIVE COMPOSER—FRANK NAGEL'S EFFORTS IN DES MOINES.

THE "LEGITIMATE" ARTIST IN VAUDEVILLE.

It was in the second year of Mr. B. F. Keith's tenancy of the Union Square Theatre that the first symptoms of the "legit" invasion began to develop. Loie Fuller had come to America in 1892 with a strange "galaxy of celebrities," and opened at the Garden Theatre one extreme hot night in August. "La Loie" proved a veritable furore, but her company seemed to bore despite that it included among others Olga Brandon, supported by Paul Arthur and John Kellard, in a sketch entitled "A Visit." The very same playlet Polaire used here. Isabella Urquhart and Guy Standing, in "A Morning Call"; Signor Tagliapietra, the baritone; Alice J. Shaw, the Siffleuse, and Florence Levey, the gayety girl. J. A. Fynes was at this time Mr. Keith's right-hand man at the Union Square, and up to this time, with the exception of a team named Redding and Stanton, who had been presenting "A Happy Pair" in vaudeville, no actor or actress from the legitimate stage had yet been

attracted by Mr. Keith's new policy, but Mr. Fynes was quick to see the possibilities, and Mr. Proctor, who was just starting up his second season of the "continuous" at his 23d Street house, also was approached. The first debut of importance was Signor Campanini, the great Italian tenor, and his appearance was made the more notable, since he appeared only at 10 A. M., and Charles Benton, Proctor's hustling advertising agent, flooded the city with small cards, which read as follows:

"After Breakfast
Hear Campanini at Proctor's."

The salary of Campanini was \$600 a week. The first to appear at Keith's was Mrs. Shaw, then in the zenith of her fame. Her salary was \$250 a week, and for years her sway was uninterrupted, though to-day she is but rarely heard. Then came Ida Mulle also to the Union Square; Miss Mulle had been a town favorite as "Cupid" in "Orpheus and Eurydice" at the Bijou Theatre. Miss Mulle also had \$250 a week to induce her to forsake Broadway for the "continuous." Then Mr. Proctor got William T. Carleton, the baritone, to follow Campanini, paying him \$275 a week, which was up to then the largest salary paid, except in the case of Campanini.

The first sketch, or, rather, dramatic playlet, was captured by the Keith forces, and much doubt was felt as to the outcome. Charles Dickson had just closed a long tour in "Incog," from which "Three Twins," now running, was taken, and with his wife, Lillian Burkhardt, signed with Keith for ten weeks, and produced "The Salt Cellar." The hit was instantaneous, and their salary was increased from \$300 to

\$400 a week, and so successful were they that such stars as Robert Hilliard, Maurice Barrymore, Rose Coghlan, Marie Wainwright, and others, were enticed into the fold at salaries ranging from \$400 to \$800 a week.

In music there came into vaudeville the great Remenyi, who died at the Orpheum Theatre in San Francisco in the midst of his violin solo, and Camilla Urso, who also departed this world while playing a vaudeville engagement. Remenyi's salary was \$500 a week, while Urso's was \$400. Then came Pauline Hall, Fanny Rice, Camille D'Arville, Jessie Bartlett Davis, Margaret Sylva, and many others.

A new era in vaudeville, that which originated with salaries in excess of \$1,000 a week, began with the very sudden engagement of Charles Hawtrey, who had his passage engaged to sail for London and was captured by the wily Mr. Fynes, who was this time Mr. Proctor's lieutenant. After Hawtrey came the real deluge, and Jessie Millward, Henry Miller and others of their calibre followed.

Then came the final or present era of advanced vaudeville, which raised salaries up to \$2,500 and even \$3,000, and brought into the field such stars as Mrs. Langtry, May Irwin, Susanne Adams, Zelig De Lussan, Louis Mann, and now we are at the present date, but there is no indication that the limit has been reached, at least not while vaudeville has managers of the Percy Williams type!



Will there be an amalgamation between the interests known as "the Orpheum Circuit" and the concern known as William Morris, Inc.? A clever way to put

the query would be to ask if Martin Beck and William Morris are coming together?

The writer believes that in the present condition of the amusement business amalgamation is in order, and it is not to be doubted that wherever it is of great benefit for two contending interests to pool their issues or arrange a treaty, that they will hesitate to do so. Mr. Beck has expressed himself as favoring any arrangement which will put to an end senseless competition, and has even said that he would not be too proud to take the initiative procedure if in his opinion good results could be attained thereby.

A combination between Martin Beck and William Morris, even though it be but a working agreement, would be of vast moment in the growing field of vaudeville. The men know each other well. They have reached their present high state by precisely the same road; in fact, it is said that both simultaneously were employed in a German theatre less than twenty years ago, and both have undergone a series of vicissitudes, which made their lot a common one. These two men represent the same principles, and they are to-day intrenched with about the same ammunition for battle.

If they come together as has seemed extremely likely, they will become in short order the mightiest factors in the world, as far as vaudeville is concerned. They are necessary to each other, and each at the time of this writing is arrayed against the other for what can only be a serious and costly war in the coming theatrical season.

The elements which surround these two are of a conflicting nature. Mr. Beck is obligated under an agreement with the United Booking Offices for a period which has yet a year or two to run. The U.

B. O. have always made it a rule to end competition at any cost, as was evidenced in their hasty and perhaps foolish compromise with Klaw and Erlanger at a time when all of the anxiety was on the latter side, yet for some inexplicable reason the interests who control the balance of power in vaudeville, have not regarded William Morris as a serious competition. Perhaps they realize that competition of some kind must always exist, and are now reconciled to such a state in preference to again parting with good money to end a regime which, after all, is but a logical outcome of progress and modernism.

Mr. Morris, however, has always expressed himself as unwilling to consider any proposition which would mean any reduction of his power; he has been offered a tremendous annual salary by the U. B. O., when he was in the weakest position of his career. When he refused this offer he said he would always assume a policy of independence, but in the matter of an amalgamation with the Orpheum Circuit, or, rather, with Messrs. Myerfeld and Beck, Morris is known to incline favorably. Thus, if these giants of vaudeville try to carry out their plans for the coming season, and compete with each other in the Northwest and on the Pacific Coast, the best reason will be disclosed for their ultimate coalition, for this is the era of combinations, and only in such a way could a disastrous conflict be avoided. Both sides to the fray would be forced to present prodigious programmes while the competition lasts, and Beck and Morris are well aware that such a condition is fraught with the greatest danger to their entire entourage, hence the season of 1910-11 should see the two strongly entrenched for all time in the manner which applies now-

a-days so successfully to all important interests in the amusement world under similar circumstances.

The Western Vaudeville Managers' Association, whose offices are in the Majestic Theatre Building, Chicago, is the leading booking organization of the Middle West, and allied, as it is, with the great Orpheum Circuit and the United Booking Offices of America, form a combination whose strength might easily be compared with that of the famous Rock of Gibraltar. Its directorate comprises such men as Martin Beck, C. E. Kohl, C. E. Bray, George Castle and George Middleton, all pioneers in this field of amusement, and whose efforts more than those of any other body of men have resulted in placing vaudeville upon the high plane it occupies to-day.

The scope of the Western Vaudeville Managers' Association is a wide one, and in addition to booking more than 200 of the principal vaudeville theatres of the Middle West, its various other departments furnish attractions for fairs, parks, airdomes, clubs and every known form of entertainment. Many of the most notable bands secure their season's routing through the instrumentality of the Association. The men who are actively engaged in booking are experts in their line, and each programme is arranged only after careful study.

The home of the Western Vaudeville Managers' Association is among the most luxurious in Chicago, a city famed for its magnificent buildings and offices. Occupying two entire floors in the Majestic Building, Mr. C. E. Bray, the executive head, has fitted them with every convenience and aid known to the modern business world. Files containing inexhaustive reports on all acts from every city in which they have played;

private telegraph wires and telephone service to all departments; an attorney who passes upon all legal questions; traveling representatives both in this country and abroad on the alert for new ideas and acts, and a general office staff of more than fifty persons employed the year round. It is such an organization as this that redounds to the credit of the theatrical business. No loose methods prevail here; everything is carried out in a straightforward, aboveboard manner, with the idea of fair dealing to all; and it is for this reason that the Western Vaudeville Managers' Association has prospered over all its competitors and enjoys a position that is rightfully theirs.



Nothing is more indicative of the significance which America has come to bear in the eyes of musical Europe, and especially of its composers, than the desire of the best modern transatlantic makers of opera to realize here not only as many productions as possible of their works, but also to honor this country with the actual premieres of their very newest operas. While such a state of affairs is due naturally in part to the liberal financial inducements offered by Uncle Sam, at the same time an impartial study of the situation shows that the ambition of the foreign composers has been aroused potentially also through the fact of the amazing advance accomplished by our nation in general culture, and particularly in the domain of the tonal art. We count materially henceforth in the fixing of critical standards, and our European cousins in music have not been slow to note that circumstance.

Of course, intellectual development is not attained

at a bound, and so, while America has not yet given to the world a Beethoven or a Schubert in symphony, it is moving rapidly toward perfection in the more popular fields of opera, light and grand, lyric and dramatic. Humperdinck's "Koenigskinder," Mascagni's "Ysobel," Puccini's "Girl of the Golden West," and Pietro Floridia's "Paoletta," all were slated for their absolute premieres in America this season, to be heard here before the European public knew a note of those scores. Of the four, even in spite of Puccini's title for his opera, the most characteristically American is Floridia's "Paoletta," as that distinguished Italian has been a resident of this country for years, and not only wrote the work here, but also insisted on its issuance and exploitation through an American publisher, Leo. Feist. "In selecting him as my publisher," Floridia said in an interview, "I was actuated by both practical and sentimental reasons. In the first place, being only human, I wished a large sale for my work, and I felt sure that after his success in establishing a market for cheap editions of classical music (which he did in his remarkable Century Edition), he would bring my project to profitable fruition also. But aside from that, I recognized in the courageous and inexhaustibly energetic Mr. Feist, a man of enthusiasm and of pronounced and militant Americanism, who was quite willing to be an idealist so long as he was working to establish a principle in which he believed firmly. Mr. Feist believes in two principles chiefly, and they are that his fellow-countrymen appreciate good music, and that it should be put within their reach at reasonable prices. It is a large risk for a publisher to undertake the putting forth of a grand opera, score, parts, orchestration, and the popu-

lar single numbers, and because Mr. Feist was willing to take that risk, and believed in my opera, I gave him the chance to be the first American publisher who ever put on the music market here a complete grand opera. Others will follow, I am sure, after he has shown the way, and in that manner I felt that I have done a useful thing for those native-born but discouraged composers who were made to think for so long that it would be useless to write grand operas when publishers in this country refused even to look inside the title pages. 'Paoletta' and Mr. Feist will be found in time to have given the cause of American grand opera a more active impetus than anything else done in that direction for many decades preceding. I felt that this tribute from me to Mr. Feist is only an act of common justice, although he will not thank me for the deed, as he has an abnormal distaste for personal publicity. 'Never mind about me; boom the composers,' is one of his pet slogans in business."



Des Moines, Iowa, is another city where musical endeavor is at the topmost height. In that city the influence of one man is felt over all others.

Frank Nagel, as dean of the Highland Park College of Music, is a prominent figure in the musical world of the Middle West. The artistic and practical are so well balanced in his mental make-up, that it has needed nothing more than his educational advantages to enable him to rise to eminence. He is not a man who has to wait for opportunities—he makes the opportunity, and then carries it to a successful fruition.

His students are filling important positions all over the country. As a conductor he is potent as well as

progressive. The orchestra of his school does most excellent work. With his teachers and students he has given finished performances of grand opera in English for two seasons, to capacity houses. This is an achievement well worthy of praise, as indicating the trend in Des Moines to opera in English.

For the fifth time he has been elected Musical Conductor to the Women's Club of Des Moines, an organization which has played a large part in the up-building of high musical standards of its city.

Dean Nagel's piano-lecture recitals bring him continually before the public as a pianist. The smaller towns throughout the Middle West have been benefited by his work in this particular direction, as he goes into unbeaten paths, always with the best, and lights the desire for more of the "Divine art." As a composer he has attracted widespread interest, and was given the degree of Doctor of Music by his college in recognition of his musical work.

It is with men of the Nagel type that we have to reckon in the next five years. Nothing is surer than that such unselfish effort must attract the interest of public-spirited men, whose capital will be available to foster a survival of grand opera in the vernacular.

CHAPTER XVII

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF FREDERIC THOMPSON, ISAAC C. MISHLER, A. L. WILBUR, HENRY G. SOMMERS, WALTER N. LAWRENCE, MADISON COREY, THE STIRLINGS OF DETROIT, EDWARD J. SULLIVAN, E. S. BRIGHAM, RICHARD CARLE, JOHN R. KIRK, FREDERICK STOCK, WILLARD SPENSER, NORMAN HACKETT, MARSHALL P. WILDER, AND RICHARD BENNETT.

Frederic Thompson is so thoroughly illustrative of the modern type of theatrical business man that his achievements have more than ordinary interest for the reader. Little was known of him or his erstwhile business associate, Elmer F. Dundy, when the two created a sensation six years ago by announcing as a positive fact that they would erect a real hippodrome in the Metropolis. It is true that they had attracted much attention with their colossal undertaking at Luna Park, but it was the Hippodrome that caused these mere boys to be regarded with open wonder. When inaugurated, the entire enterprise was so wholly beyond anything New Yorkers had ever known, that it really took a year to reach a gait.

For reasons which are unnecessary to be related here, this firm retired, and the Hippodrome was leased by the Messrs. Shubert and Anderson, but it is hardly fair to assume that the genius of its original promoters is in any sense dimmed because that grand institution is now bearing the fruit, which their un-

paralleled foresight has made possible. The Shuberts inherited the enterprise in the same sense that Herr Conried inherited the Metropolitan Opera House, after Maurice Grau had solved the operatic problem there.

The discernment which Frederic Thompson has shown since he abandoned the Hippodrome and assumed a managerial career as a producer, is the best evidence that his earlier achievement was not accidental. There has been such an intelligent selection of material for production by Mr. Thompson, since he first scored so emphatically with "Brewster's Millions," that his offerings are now discounted in his favor; not once has a comparative failure been credited to him while his successes are all of a lasting character. Mr. Thompson's management of Robert Hilliard, and the development of the latter's vogue as a star, in the face of much pessimism and criticism, was one of the most ingenious and courageous demonstrations of managerial acumen ever observed by the writer, while the starring tour of Edmund Breeze in "The Spendthrift" bids fair to be quite as compelling.



Isaac C. Mishler was born at Lancaster, Pa., September 30th, 1862. He removed to Altoona, Pa., in 1882, and embarked in business; in 1894 he leased the Eleventh Avenue Opera House Altoona, Pa., from Charles Broadway Rouss, of New York, and, after renovating the house, opened it on August 31st, 1894, with "The Fencing Master." He leased and opened the Johnstown Opera House, Johnstown, Pa., the same year, and conducted it till destroyed by fire. Mr. Mishler opened the New Cambria Theatre, Johnstown, Pa., in 1895, and has conducted same to this

day. In October, 1903, he opened the St. Clair Opera House, Greensburg, Pa., with "The Prince of Pilsen," and built the State Street Theatre, Trenton, N. J., opening the latter on the evening of December 9th, 1903, with Mrs. Fiske in "Mary of Magdala," to receipts of \$2,908, for one night. The Mishler Theatre in Altoona, Pa., opened on February 15th, 1906, with Eleanor Robson in "Merely Mary Ann." It was destroyed by fire October, 1906, and was rebuilt and reopened January, 1907, with Wright Lorrimer.

This house is famous for doing the largest one-night stand business, holding many records for big receipts, which, for one opening performance, were \$3,258. Another performance in May, 1910, drew \$2,539, with David Warfield in "The Music Master."

Isaac is a cousin of John D. Mishler, of Reading, Pa., and previous to the latter's retiring from theatrical business, was financially interested with him in the Mishler Circuit. Some specimen receipts at the Mishler Altoona Theatre are January 21st, 1907, Wright Lorrimer, \$2,973; the week of November 18th, 1907, six nights and one matinee, \$12,689.25 (for Ben-Hur); Monday, March 11th, 1907, Annie Russell, one night, \$2,045.

Here is disclosed what may be considered the progress of the one-night stand; it is not so long ago that any of these records would have been regarded extraordinary for a full week.



A. L. Wilbur is about as good an illustration of the American theatrical man as can be selected for the purpose of denoting what one man can accomplish when he decides on eliminating precarious investments

from his career. Wilbur began in the period when "Hazel Kirke" was the play of the hour, and companies were sent out all over the country under the Frohman Brothers. Wilbur provided a share of the capital; then he went in for comic opera, producing "The Mascot," originally in Boston, under the stage direction of Isaac W. Norcross. He lost \$50,000 trying to educate the public to artistic renditions, so he shifted his policy and went in for "cheap opera." He carried a company of seventy-five persons, giving a repertoire of eight operas a week, adding also four or five big vaudeville acts, and even one or two celebrities; the prices of admission were from ten to thirty cents. Wilbur made a fortune, and for fifteen years or so the Wilbur Opera Company was a standard organization.

Wilbur, however, retired from operatic management and joined hands with several men who have had a part in the upbuilding of the theatrical business. It is hard, in fact, to say whom Wilbur has not been partner of. He is president of an amusement company that owns the Lyceum and Burt's Theatre, Toledo, Ohio; he is part owner with the Messrs. Shubert in the Majestic Theatres, New York and Boston, also of the New Shubert Theatre in Boston, the West End, New York, and The Globe, Boston; he is a director of the company owning the Majestic Theatre in Brooklyn, also of the Bijou Theatre, Pittsburg, and the Globe, Chicago; while he is an important stockholder in the National Amusement Company, which owns theatres in Saginaw, Mich.; Peoria, Springfield, Rockford, Ill.; Findlay, Ohio, and Port Huron, Michigan.

Mr. Wilbur is sought at all times, when capital is

required for expansion by his many associates, and he has been singularly fortunate in his undertakings. To-day he is in the position of spending his time keeping records of the dividends he receives.



When on February 22, 1900, the Hon. Henry C. Miner dropped dead at his house on Riverside Drive the gentlemen known to the theatrical profession as the "Miner Boys" had suddenly thrust upon them the conduct of a large and diversified business.

Henry, who was managing the Miner Lithographing Company, was immediately put in charge of the executive and financial end of the business; Edwin and he took the operation of theatres, Thomas of road shows, and George was given supervision of the Drug Stores and Theatrical Make-Up business. The smoothness with which they worked is evidenced by the fact that they increased the profits of the business the first year it was under their direction, and that in the face of the stiffest kind of opposition they have not only held it up since then, but have added to, acquiring the Empire Theatre, Newark, N. J., one of the finest houses in the state. They are now interested in the building of the new theatre to be known as "Miner's in the Bronx," at Third Avenue and 156th Street. They are considered among the strongest factors of the Empire Circuit Company, which controls a chain of forty theatres in the principal cities of the United States, and are represented by Henry Clay Miner on the Board of Directors of that Company.

The theatres owned or controlled by the members of the Miner Estate at present consist of the People's Theatre, Miner's Eighth Avenue, and the Bowery

theatres in Manhattan, the Newark and Empire theatres in Newark, N. J., and the new "Miner's in the Bronx," which opens shortly. These with two drug stores, six road shows, the Miner Lithographing and Printing concern and the Theatrical Make-Up business constitute a concern of considerable magnitude and enormous detail; nevertheless, it is understood that they are still on the lookout for new ventures if they promise to be profitable.



Harry G. Sommers was born November 24, 1869, and his theatrical career started as assistant treasurer in Hooley's Theatre, Chicago, in 1887; in connection with his duties as assistant treasurer he also acted as chief usher. Mr. Sommers at the time he entered the theatrical business was studying law with Judge Goggin in Chicago. Mr. Hooley, happening to be a client of Judge Goggin, suggested that Sommers help out in the ticket office one day when they were short of help. Sommers readily agreed, and the first tickets he sold were for John T. Raymond, in "The Gilded Age." He worked in that capacity, and then went to the Columbia Theatre under Messrs. Hill & Shelby as treasurer. This was a strenuous year for young Sommers, as the partners did not agree, and he was the go-between. As a conclusion to that season Sommers sold tickets for the first entertainment ever given in the Auditorium, a War Song Concert, given by the Veteran Union League. That Fall he was sent for by Mr. J. H. McVicker and made treasurer of his theatre. In August, 1890, McVicker's Theatre was destroyed by fire, and Sommers then went to the Columbia with Messrs. Al. Hayman and Will J. Davis

as treasurer, returning in March, 1891, to McVicker's as business manager and treasurer, and at the death of Mr. McVicker, in 1896, Mr. Sommers again returned to the Columbia Theatre, this time as business manager as well as treasurer. The last one to leave the building when it was destroyed by fire in March, 1900, Mr. Sommers had a narrow escape climbing out through the ticket office window, just in time to avoid being crushed by the walls that caved in immediately after his escape. The Illinois Theatre was opened October 15, 1900, with Mr. Sommers acting in the capacity of business manager. In 1901 Mr. Al Hayman brought Mr. Sommers to New York to become the business manager of the Knickerbocker Theatre, which position he holds at the present time.

Mr. Sommers is the lessee and manager of several theatres in Indiana, Michigan and Illinois; the most prominent of these are Powers Theatre, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Auditorium and Oliver Opera House in South Bend, Dryfus Theatre in Lafayette, the Indiana Theatre in Marion, and the Gennett Theatre in Richmond, Indiana. Mr. Sommers also made several productions, the last being "The Lightning Conductor," with Herbert Kelcy and Effie Shannon in the leading roles.

The first rehearsal Mr. Sommers ever attended was that of "A Winter's Tale," given the Sunday evening previous to the engagement in McVicker's Theatre, of Miss Mary Anderson. The advance sale was the biggest that Mr. Sommers had ever handled up to the time. He had formed an exalted idea of Miss Anderson's personality a long time before he saw her. These dream ideals were rudely destroyed when he, sitting in the last row of the Auditorium, heard Miss Ander-

son from the middle of the house, speaking in a voice which might be styled a "yell," directing the supers who were taking part in the play, as to their costumes, etc. Miss Anderson stood pointing to a super, telling him, "Your pants are too long," and, "Girl, your stockings are not the right color." Mr. Sommers was so heart-broken over these remarks which shattered his youthful imaginative ideals, that he left the Theatre.

Mr. Sommers, while he was still in his 'teens, wrote the book of a musical comedy, the music of which was composed by Mr. H. H. Thiele, and he had the nerve to produce it.



A recital of the era of affluence for the American playwright would be incomplete if it did not include a tribute to the efforts of one man who based his career and established a theatre with no other purpose in view.

Walter N. Lawrence has been a prime factor for more than ten years in the uplift which has come to the strictly national drama. His father, Charles L. Lawrence, a generation ago, was closely affiliated with the theatre, and was an intimate friend of the impresarios of that day, and gave moral and practical aid to the Graus, the Strakosches and Maretzeks, at a period of our theatre when public spirit was lacking to the extent it is to-day practiced.

The American tours of great foreign stars and operatic celebrities were greatly facilitated through the elder Mr. Lawrence's efforts. In these associations the son soon came to the front.

Walter N. Lawrence's tenancy of the Madison Square Theatre was indeed a notable one. Here were

developed the careers of such authors as Grace Livingston Furniss, Edward Peple, Rachel Crothers, and others, and at least four substantial and enduring successes were evolved in "Mrs. Temple's Telegram," "The Prince Chap," "The Man on the Box," and "The Three of Us," while "The Climax" was not only produced by Mr. Lawrence, but its plot and title originated from his brain, and he arranged with Mr. Locke to put his ideas in play form. Mr. Lawrence has been in litigation with Joseph Weber over the conduct of the business side of this valuable vehicle.



Madison Corey was born at Swampscott, Mass., April 27, 1873, and was brought up at Brookline, Mass.

He studied classical courses with the intention of entering the ministry. At an early age he was taught the piano by several of the best teachers in Boston, and as a boy was well known as a soloist. Through some of his appearances in concerts he attracted the attention of various theatrical managers, and was called upon frequently to appear in plays requiring a pianist.

The late Charles H. Hoyt engaged him to play the piano, supposedly played by the famous beauty, Caroline Miskel Hoyt. Mr. Corey had previously played several engagements, but this engagement led him to take up a stage career seriously. Mr. Hoyt cast him for a number of parts in "Temperance Town," "The Midnight Bell," "A Contented Woman," "The Milk White Flag," and the "Runaway Colt." Later he assumed the management of Messrs. Richards & Canfield, in their second starring venture, which proved successful.

In 1902 he became associated with Mr. Henry W. Savage, and was shortly afterwards appointed production manager. Two years later he bought from Mr. Savage, George Ade's successful musical pieces, the "Sultan of Sulu," and "Peggy from Paris." These ventures were handled very successfully, and were very profitable. Three years later he rejoined Mr. Savage, and has remained since as Mr. Savage's Production Manager.

Mr. Corey is a 32nd degree Mason, member of the Friars, Green Room Club, The Lambs, and The New York Athletic Club.

On February 9th, 1910, he was married to Miss Mabel Wilber.



In the first volume the writer had occasion to observe certain achievements of a young and seemingly (at the time) almost unknown personage, James R. Sullivan by name. The writer has never met Mr. Sullivan, but has been much impressed by the methods of this industrious individual in arousing public interest in his star, the beautiful diver, Miss Annette Kellermann.

The writer prophesied that Mr. Sullivan would be heard from, that he was of the material whence the next generation of magnates of the theatre would hail, and further observed that his progress would be watched with much interest, but he had no idea that in the short space of time intervening between the issue of "Forty Years" and this date, Mr. Sullivan would "come across" with such astounding rapidity.

If there was anything accidental about Annette Kellermann's reaching an almost unparalleled stellar posi-

tion, that idea has surely now been dissipated, for theatrical history cannot record any instance of similar potency in a star, nor has there ever come to light evidence of such sustained interest in an amusement attraction as that which is to-day possessed by the "diving Venus."

Annette Kellermann's appearance in a vaudeville theatre at this time is an event of such importance, that, at the opening of the sale of seats in any auditorium where she is announced, one would suppose a Bernhardt or a Patti was scheduled to appear. Fancy, ye pessimists of other days, the spectacle of a \$1,500 a week celebrity holding forth two weeks in cities like Syracuse and Rochester! Can anything better illustrate her sway? And in these cities as in all others, records were smashed at the box office again and again.

Either Annette Kellermann is the greatest box office attraction the stage has ever known, or else her manager is the most compelling genius of modern theatrical achievement, and the writer is inclined to the belief that both statements qualify.

Once Annette Kellermann came into prominence, she has not known an idle week, nor has she ever missed a performance, and although her manager has been more than once ensnared into a maze of managerial difficulties by reason of the demand for her services, there has been a certain dignity at all times evident in the manner of her presentation before the public.

The writer believes that the rising generation of theatre-goers will hear much of young Sullivan, and if there is anything that he has not inveigled Miss Kellermann into, from the patentee of a bathing suit

to the ownership of a vast summer resort, he surely will have corrected the oversight by the time this volume reaches its readers.

Sullivan was a poor Western boy who began in his earliest youth to do things, and he was intrusted by Miss Kellermann's father with the direction of her business affairs, when the latter became incapacitated himself. Ever since he has shown an extraordinary passion for advancing the interests of his star, until he has, alone and unaided and in spite of much handicap, installed her permanently as the Queen of Modern Vaudeville.



John R. Stirling was so well liked when he managed the Star Theatre in Buffalo, that managers and stars alike were known to refuse to dicker between competitive theatres where he was among those concerned. Mr. Stirling has had an interesting career, too. He was a tenor in the early '70s, and was admitted to the bar in 1879, in Michigan. Then he became enamored with comic opera in the early period of the "Pinafore" craze, and was a part proprietor of the Acme Opera Company (E. D. Stair, of Stair and Havlin being the business manager). Comic opera was a most precarious field in this period, so that Mr. Stirling was glad to return to other pursuits. In 1895 he became a partner of E. D. Stair and C. J. Whitney, and was the manager and part proprietor of the Star Theatre in Buffalo, where he remained ten years, he, in the meantime having acquired, in conjunction with Mr. Stair, the leases of the Teck Theatre in the same city, as well as the Academy of Music, thus practically controlling the city theatrically.

In 1904 Mr. Stirling returned to Detroit, having abandoned active management, but retaining all of his business interests, which include the Rose Melville "Sis Hopkins" Company, an attraction which he has made famous and prosperous. Recently he purchased the Hotel St. Claire in Detroit, and this enterprise now monopolizes his attention.

"Jack" Stirling is a son of John R., and he was born in the atmosphere of the theatre, being carried across the ice by Eliza in "Uncle Tom's Cabin" when six weeks of age. He was an usher in his father's theatre in Buffalo, passing rapidly up the scale until he became the business manager of the same establishment. Then he became manager of the little German star, Alma Doerge, whom he afterward married. The younger Stirling is now attending to the details of his father's theatrical affairs, besides producing many vaudeville sketches, of which he himself has written the majority. He also has achieved success as a song writer, and some of his efforts in this line have enjoyed widespread popularity.



Between the cities of Chicago and San Francisco on the Northern route of transcontinental travel, the theatrical tribe of nomads will find but one oasis in the desert of one-night stands. This oasis is composed of two cities, St. Paul and Minneapolis, known as the Twin Cities of the Northwest. They are jointly the home and business residence of Louis N. Scott, who is manager of the Metropolitan Opera House in St. Paul and the Metropolitan Opera House in Minneapolis. He is a magnate whose weight and influence are felt far beyond the confines of his own territory.

Mr. Scott is a Kentuckian. During the early part of his career he drifted to Cincinnati, Ohio, and eventually to St. Louis, where, at the age of sixteen he embarked in the steamboat business.



Edw. J. Sullivan, manager of the Studebaker Theatre, in Chicago, was born at Bath, Me., 1880. He entered the theatrical business as program boy at the old Portland Theatre in Portland, Maine, in 1895. Three years later he was appointed manager of the theatre by Mr. Chas. C. Tewkesbury, then lessee of the theatre. From Portland, Mr. Sullivan went to the Lowell Opera House as treasurer for Fay Brothers & Hosford, and after one season went to Waterbury, Conn., as manager of the Poli Theatre for Jean Jacques. After one season at Waterbury he was appointed on the manager's staff of Liebler & Co., by Mr. William F. Connor, and handled all the big attractions of that firm, including Signora Eleanora Duse, in her last American tour. When Madame Sarah Bernhardt made her world famous tour in 1905, Mr. Sullivan was chosen by Mr. Connor (under whose direction the tour was guided) to act as the manager with the attraction. At the close of the tour, Messrs. Connor and Sullivan were the guests of Madame Bernhardt at her summer home at Belle Isle, on the Brittany Coast. After returning from Europe, he was appointed manager by the Shuberts for the tour of James T. Powers in "The Blue Moon" and De Wolf Hopper in "Happyland." For the past three years he has been the manager of the Studebaker Theatre in Chicago for Dillingham & Connor of New York City.

E. S. Brigham is president and managing director of the Middle West Amusement Company, a corporation which holds leases on the Gilliss Theatre, Kansas City, Mo.; also of the Auditorium Theatre, Hot Springs, Ark., the Atchison Theatre, Atchison, Kan., and the Blake Theatre, Webb City, Mo.

Mr. Brigham has been engaged in the theatrical business about twenty years, and is one of the most successful and energetic circuit and theatre managers in the Middle West. His theatres are all well managed and thoroughly advertised.

The Gilliss Theatre at Kansas City is now conducted as a popular price house, but all of Mr. Brigham's other houses play the high price and high-class attractions.

In addition to his theatre holdings, Mr. Brigham is also interested very extensively in the advertising business.

A word may well be added as a tribute to this manager's uniform courtesy to the visiting player. A spirit of cordiality on the part of the attaches in Mr. Brigham's theatres has always been noticeable.



Richard Carle is one of the unique persons of the American stage. He is author, composer, lyric writer, stage manager, dancing instructor, star comedian and producer. He not only writes his own plays, but he provides much of the music, arranges the dances, preparing the sketches for the scenery, produces and manages his plays, thereby drawing salary as star, drawing royalties from his songs and participating in the net profits as manager.

Mr. Carle is still on the sunny side of forty. He

was born in Somerville, Mass., a suburb of Boston. He was christened Charles H. Carleton. His father, Edgar W. Carleton, still lives in Somerville. According to the father, everything indicated a stage career for the son from earliest youth. When he was still in his kilts, young Carleton strung a wire screen across an unused wagon loft, mounted some old chintz curtains and gave shows in which he furnished the whole entertainment. The admission fee was ten nails, and the receipts were cashed at a junk dealer's.

When he was 15 or 16, young Carleton fed his stage fever with frequent but fugitive trips to the old Howard Atheneum in Boston. There in exchange for admission he passed out programmes—a tall, gawky boy with light hair, spectacles and an imitation fur cap, with the accompanying ear muffs, tied together atop. He had a keen eye for Somerville faces, and when he saw a neighbor coming he introduced the novelty of passing out programmes behind his back. To get out nights he elected himself a member of a mythical club which had for recreations whist, sleigh riding, candy pulling and spelling matches.

"It's strange your club never meets at our house," observed his father.

"Yes, it is strange," replied the son; "but our club is very peculiar."

Watching the old-timers at the Howard was an inspiration to young Carleton. Several of the men now prominent in amusements used to be great favorites at the old music hall, and he longed to be able to sing, dance and do funny falls as they did. The idea of the legitimate stage also occurred to him, for once in a day-dream he had printed this card, which he quietly slipped to his mother one morning:

**RICHARD CARLE,
Boston Museum.**

His mother beamed on him fondly as she saw him in perspective a representative actor.

"But I never dared to show that card to father, who was sitting across the table," declares the comedian. However, he clung to the name, and the following summer found him putting out handbills announcing at various summer resorts, "Richard Carle in imitations and at the piano." He charged no admission, but trusted to the generosity of his audience, adding naively that he had no change.

He had been in this kind of work only a short time when he applied for a job to Rich & Harris, of Boston, at whose theatre James T. Powers was playing in "A Mad Bargain." He was engaged at \$25 a week. After "A Mad Bargain," Mr. Carle appeared in various plays, including "A Country Sport," in which the late Peter F. Dailey was then starring. But the turning point in his career came with his engagement in "The Lady Slavey" at the New York Casino. His aptitude was such that George W. Lederer took him to London with the company that stayed there two years in "The Casino Girl," "An American Beauty," and "The Belle of Bohemia." During this engagement he rose to be leading man.

Returning to America, he began writing for the stage. As author, his first work was "Mam'selle 'Awkins," closely followed by a burlesque, "Way-Up East," which was presented by several notable casts. About this time he was engaged by the old Dearborn Theatre Company of Chicago. First he revamped "The Explorers," originally a failure, into something

of a success, then he worked out another's ideas on the fanciful topic, "The Storks." This work had its handicaps, and Mr. Carle had no opportunity of showing his real skill until he wrote "The Tenderfoot."

This musical comedy was refreshing and it was a hit from the first night. He appeared as Prof. Zachariah Pettibone, the leading character, playing the part upwards of two years.

Then followed "The Mayor of Tokio," another big success, with Mr. Carle in the part of Marcus Orlando Kidder, a theatrical manager. This part he played almost two years. In the meantime he had written and produced "The Maid and the Mummy," which enjoyed wide popularity, although he never played in it himself.

During the summer of 1906 he was engaged to "Americanize" a musical comedy, "The Spring Chicken," which had been running for two solid years at the Gaiety Theatre in London. He undertook the task, rearranged the piece, added five songs of his own and wrote in his own part. The result was quick success when "The Spring Chicken" was produced that fall. The play ran four months in New York, three months in Chicago and two months in Boston, and it established Mr. Carle as a playwright of the first rank.

In the summer of 1907 he finished the manuscript of a musical comedy, "The Boy and the Girl," for the Bank Officers' Association of Boston, which produced the play with great success in February, 1908.

While he was on the road Mr. Carle worked over an old French farce, "Madame Mongodin," which he renamed "Mary's Lamb." As in the case of "The Spring Chicken," he provided book, lyrics and music.

"Mary's Lamb" was produced March 2, 1908, in Columbus, Ohio, and was a success from the very start. It ran for three months in New York and also enjoyed extended runs in Boston and Chicago.



In Kirksville, Mo., musical problems are being solved through the untiring effort and ceaseless energy of John R. Kirk. He is president of the State Normal School at Kirksville, Mo.; and has organized a campaign for universal education in music. His Normal School is of college rank, and furnishes teachers for all grades of public schools, from kindergarten to high school inclusive. It is evident that if all these teachers are educated in music they will be impelled to educate all the children in music; and this is just exactly what the procedure now evolving provides for.

Mr. Kirk places music education on an equality with other school and college education. The Kirksville Normal School pays as high salaries in the Music Department as it does in other departments. It has the same number of teachers in that department that it has in other departments. It charges the same tuition for a music education as it does for education in mathematics, languages and other subjects, but it charges no more for music than for the other subjects.

This school has a more or less permanent financial support of about \$70,000 per year. It has forty-two teachers. It has many elective courses. Its graduates secure positions in all grades of public schools; they fill many superintendencies and principalships.

The purpose of this great teachers' college is to furnish for the public schools a generation of music teachers who have genuine college education as the

foundation for their specialty in music. The school has numerous choruses and gives annually music festivals by combining its choruses with some symphony orchestra from one of the large cities.

The music department of this institution is presided over by Captain D. R. Gebhart. The graduates of the Department are finding ready employment as music supervisors, and the demand for such graduates is so great that many of them secure employment outside the State of Missouri.

The writer has been greatly impressed by the result of his inquiry into the workings of Mr. Kirk's institution and its policies. Here we have the very foundation of nationalism in music, and the prophecies made in this volume as to a Renaissance of grand opera in English, are based greatly on such work as is being done quietly but vigorously at Kirksville.



Frederick Stock was born in Julich, Germany, November 11, 1872. His father, who was a bandmaster in the German army, was his first teacher. At the age of fourteen he entered the Cologne Conservatory, graduating as a violinist and then taking up the study of composition under Humperdinck, Heinrich Zollner, Gustav Jensen and Granz Wullner, at the same time playing in the Municipal Orchestra. In 1895 he came to America and joined the Chicago Orchestra, then under the direction of Theodore Thomas who, in 1899, appointed him assistant conductor. Beginning in the spring of 1903 he conducted all the concerts outside of Chicago, and at the death of Mr. Thomas, January 4th, 1905, he succeeded to the conductorship. Mr. Stock's compositions, in the larger form, include over-

tures, a symphonic poem, a set of symphonic variations on an original theme, which has had numerous presentations in Chicago, and has also been played in Pittsburg under Emil Paur, and at the Worcester Festival of 1906 under Franz Kneisel. Mr. Stock's latest addition to musical literature is a Symphony in C Minor, which had its initial production December 31st, 1909, in Chicago. This composition was also played under the direction of the composer at the Cincinnati Festival, May 7th, 1910.



Willard Spencer, composer-librettist, has written three very successful comic operas, "The Little Tycoon," "The Princess Bonnie," and "Miss Bob White." "The Little Tycoon" has the distinction of being the first successful comic opera written by an American, achieving the phenomenal run of over three thousand performances in the United States and Canada.



Mr. Norman Hackett is a University of Michigan man, class of '98. Upon entering college, he enrolled himself in the lecture courses of the academic department, which he considered necessary foundations for the realization of his ambition to become a dramatic critic. These courses included studies in literature, especially the Elizabethan period and Shakespeare, languages and oratory. He was one of the founders of the famous Michigan Comedy Club, and became its first leading man.

Receiving an offer from Mlle. Rhea, he left college in his second year, and made his professional debut with her in "Josephine." He soon realized that a

greater future lay before him as an actor than as a critic, and since then his progress has been healthy and substantial, the past season bringing him into his own as a successful star in the De Mille play, "Classmates."

Mr. Hackett is an excellent example of the intelligent, serious actor, who believes in the worthy ambition to do his best in the best his art affords, and is an able representative of the college man succeeding on the stage largely through his scholastic training.

Mr. Hackett has won an enviable reputation for himself in the classic drama. For the past ten years he has been associated with such eminent actors as Louis James, Frederick Warde, E. H. Sothern, Julia Marlowe, Kathryn Kidder, James O'Neill and Robert B. Mantell. His most successful interpretations have been "Henry VIII," "Macduff," "Claudio," "Horatio," "Lysander," "Florizel" and "Cassius." He frankly acknowledges that the classic training is the best foundation for an actor, and in taking up the modern drama he is following a popular demand, which cannot be ignored.



Of Marshall P. Wilder, the most interesting thing to be related is that he was the only artist who, in the writer's experience, had his salary printed on his contracts; and as long as the writer was in a position to know, he never deviated from the fixed sum of \$500 a week. Wilder's contracts also stipulated clearly the position he was to occupy in the billing as well as to name the time he would appear at each performance. The only other artist who was able to obtain the vaudeville managers' signature to his own contracts

was Robert Hilliard. In this instance, the purpose of Hilliard was so clearly for the best artistic ends, and with a view to make certain the provision of the necessities of his productions, that rarely if ever was there any hesitation as to signing the agreements of this player.



Richard Bennett was born in Indiana, at Deacon's Mills, May 21, 1875. His forebears on his father's side, were all practical and inartistic; those on mother's side were of the theoretical and artistic sort. He naturally drifted toward stage. Hard work, many heartaches, and a spirit that won't give up, constitutes his make-up. Of success there has been little; of hard work, much.

He has played in a great many successes on Broadway.

Mr. H. Arthur Jones said that Mr. Bennett was a representative of the typical lovable American boy, when he saw him play the son in "The Lion and the Mouse" in London. Mr. Bennett also was in the support of Grace George in "Divorcons" in London, where he is almost as well known as he is in New York, having played in three productions there in one year, viz.: "The Lion and the Mouse," "Strong Heart," and "Divorcons." The critics were almost unanimous in placing Mr. Bennett on the pedestal of recognition as the foremost young actor of America, when he created the part of John Shaud in "What Every Woman Knows" in this country. Mr. Bennett will be a Frohman star before the ink dries on these pages (we hope), as the play for his debut is chosen. He is the husband of Mabel Morrison, daughter of Lewis Morri-

son of "Faust" fame, and Rose Wood, a sweet memory of the good old Lester Wallack days.



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